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ADULT LEADER

JANUARY, 1937

Vol. XIII No. 1

A Journal of Christian Education and Church Work

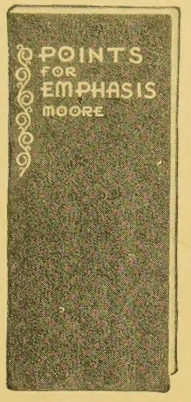
"I am the New Year, and I come to you pure and unstained,
Fresh from the hand of God"

The American Baptist Publication Society, Philadelphia, Pa.

INTERNATIONAL LESSON GUIDES 1937

Points for Emphasis

Hight C. Moore



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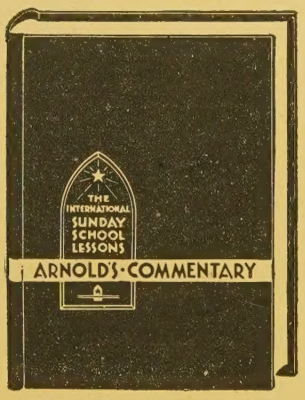

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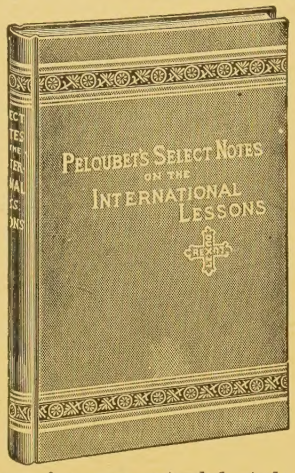

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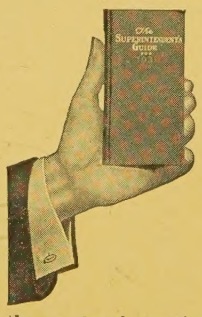

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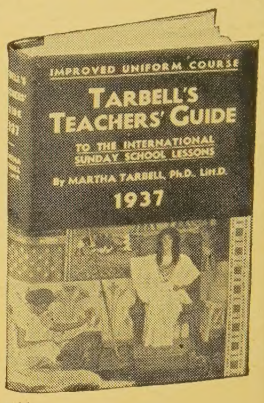

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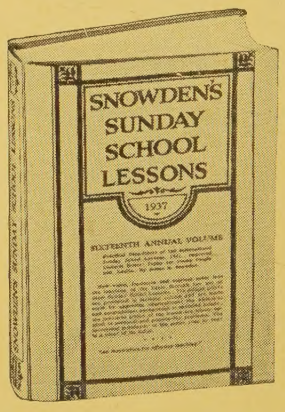

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Compiled by *Eugenia Le Fils*

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CONTENTS

PAGE

TWO POEMS. *Carmen Malone* 1
JESUS, THE WATER OF LIFE. *John Snape, D. D.* 2
STATISTICS OF THE SUNDAY SCHOOLS OF THE WORLD 3
LEARNING FOR LIFE; THE NEW ADULT PROGRAM. *O. G. Herbrecht* .. 4
TOO MANY CHURCHES; TOO LITTLE CHRISTIANITY. *Mark A. Dawber, D. D.* 5
WHY I TEACH. *Asa Q. Burns* 7
THE LIQUOR PROBLEM TODAY. *Deets Pickett* 9
TWENTY-EIGHTH ANNUAL CZECHOSLOVAK BAPTIST CONVENTION, CHICAGO, ILL. 12
PHILATHEA CLASS, FIRST BAPTIST CHURCH, FORT SCOTT, KANS. 13
RECENT BOOKS 14
HUMOR, OLD AND NEW 14
INTERNATIONAL SUNDAY SCHOOL LESSONS 15
A CHURCH SCHOOL WORSHIP SERVICE 32

With this one hundred and forty-seventh issue of ADULT LEADER *we begin its thirteenth year and volume. When Dr. Owen C. Brown became the Society's editor-in-chief of Sunday school publications, in 1924, one of his first undertakings was the starting of the three* Leaders. *The general design and format of* ADULT LEADER *were more or less original with him, though the magazine was intended to take the place of the previously published* Sunday School Worker, *the* Adult Class Teacher, *and the* Men's Class. *The initial number of* ADULT LEADER *was that for October, 1924, but this and the issues for November and December were included in and numbered with Volume I.*

TWO POEMS

By Carmen Malone

Springtown, Texas

I

THE NEW YEAR COMES

Another page is turning in the book of time;
Yesterday was old—tomorrow in its prime—
Today is lush with promise of three hundred days
And then threescore and five, in which to give Thee praise;
Today is teeming with new life, abrim with hope
That time will give no task with which we cannot cope.
Lord, may this be a year for soul's prosperity!
Dear Master, may it be for Thee, for only Thee!

II

PRAYER FOR JANUARY

For striking patterns that the winter's silver
Pencil draws upon my window-panes,
For glistening frosted tracery on grass,
For winding beauty of tree-bordered lanes,
For stark brown silhouettes against the sky,
For proud and persevering evergreens—
Their branches bared to onslaught of the gales,
For sifting snow which makes for lovely scenes.

For snow which banks, and melting gives the earth
Its moisture to insure the growth in spring
Of garden-plants, of orchards, crops in fields;
For warm hearth-stones, for shelter—everything
That tends to give of comfort in our homes;
For crisp, invigorating outdoor air,
For all of January's winter beauty,
All her meaning—for all Thy tender care,
Father in Heaven, we thank Thee!

Jesus the Water of Life

By JOHN SNAPE, D. D., Los Angeles, California

There is much of tradition, something of fiction, and a modicum of fraud in Palestine; but more of fact and permanency.

We do not know, for instance, the exact site of the crucifixion nor the place of the burial and resurrection, though two places are pointed out for each event. I smiled when the guide showed me the exact site along the Mediterranean where the whale got rid of Jonah; the exact place in the wall at Damascus where Paul was let down in a basket; the very oak under which Abraham entertained the angels; the very olive-tree under which in agony Jesus sweat great drops of blood. Living in California, and knowing that no olive-tree is to be found in the world older than five hundred years, I took this last bit of information, certainly, with a pretty big grain of salt.

But what difference can it make, anyhow? The fact of Christ's crucifixion is of more value than the site; the fact of his resurrection more blessed than the place of the tomb; the fact of his agony in the garden more instructive than the location of the garden. I knew that I was near the actual spots where the various events in Christ's life and death occurred, and that was enough for me. "Holy fields—Over whose acres walk'd those blessed feet."

Some things in Palestine are fixed. Mount Hermon is fixed; Mount Lebanon is fixed; Lake Galilee is fixed; the Dead Sea is fixed; Nazareth is fixed; Jerusalem is fixed; Jericho is fixed; Jacob's Well is fixed. They are all where they were when the peerless Man of Galilee was there, founding a new faith and shifting the currents of civilization.

Jacob's Well is fixed. It is in the same old place, and I drank water from it six summers ago. A partly finished Greek church was being built over it; and an old priest was there to show it to me, to sell post-cards of it, and to hold out his hand for *bakshish* as I left. It is one hundred feet down to the water, and the water itself is twenty feet deep. It is the well from which Jacob and his sons drank; and here, too, Christ Jesus came, dusty and thirsty, and asked a drink of a Samaritan woman, and talked to her about the water of life. It is located at Sychar, near Mount Ebal and Mount Gerizim, and not far from the home of the strange Samaritans, two hundred of whom are still there and still saying, "In this mountain men ought to worship."

Jesus had left Judea for Galilee because he had read hostility written in the faces of the Pharisees. And he must needs go through Samaria. It was not a geographical necessity but a moral one. It was in line with the plan and scope of his ministry. Here was a soul that needed him, and where Christ was needed there must he "needs pass through." He was weary and dusty and thirsty; and he sat thus at Jacob's Well.

The disciples have gone up into the village to buy food, and while Jesus sits on the well-curb a woman approaches. She is a Samaritan, he a Jew, and as Jews have no dealings with the Samaritans, she is startled at his quiet request for a drink of water. Putting oneself under obligation to another is always a sure way of gaining a favorable hearing; by this method Jesus built standing-room in her soul for the conversation that follows. To her, first of all, he opened up the fact that he was indeed the Messiah of the world.

It is a rare gift to be a good conversationalist; it is not enough to be a good talker. That takes neither brains nor art—only vocal-chords. Conversation implies reticence, modulation, patience and politeness. Few of us are good conversationalists, though most of us are good talkers. Talk is broken, familiar, versatile, interruptive, ejaculatory, and usually on trivial matters; conversation is continuous and sustained and usually on higher subjects. Little children never hold conversation with parents; they simply talk with them. One never listens to conversation in bus or trolley-car, or at a baseball game; what one hears in such places is just talk.

Henry van Dyke dined with a friend in New York and during the dinner the friend told him that he was "dining with thirty million dollars." Doctor van Dyke replied, "Yes?" Then he listened to conversation valued at about thirty cents, he estimated.

Jesus was a great conversationalist. He knew how tactfully and impressively, to introduce the most vital subjects, with the favorable attention of his hearers and bring out their inmost thoughts. On at least ten different occasions he engaged in conversation with men and women the report of which, given in the Scriptures, would repay careful study. One cannot read about his conversations—with Nicodemus, the rationalist; with the rich young ruler, the moralist; with the near-Christian—"not far from the Kingdom"—; with the true convert, Zacchæus; with the modest man of faith, the centurion of Capernaum; with Martha the mourner; with Pilate the vacillating ruler; with Peter the penitent, and with this woman at Jacob's Well, without catching anew the force of the utterance of the soldiers sent to arrest him—"Never man spake like this man."

Jesus' method of awakening a dormant soul was a riple one. He tried first the poetic method. He said, Give me a drink." He first addressed her imagination. But she was dull and obtuse to the poetic approach. This was one time when the method of Jesus ailed.

Then he tried the moral approach. He said, "Go all your husband." This was an appeal to her conscience. She replied, "I have no husband," while at hat very moment she was living with the fifth man who was not her husband.

Then Jesus tried the spiritual approach. He said, God is spirit, and they that worship him must worhip him in spirit—and in truth." This was an appeal o her heart.

Upon this came the disciples. They wondered that e talked—according to the King James version—with *he* woman—Oh, no, they did not wonder that he alked with *the* woman, but with *a* woman. It was not hat they knew the character of the woman, or that hey had any doubts about the character of Jesus, or ecause of the religious and political prejudices of the ews toward Samaritans; they wondered that he alked with any woman. Some rabbis said that a man hould not salute a woman in a public place, not even f she were his own wife. Yet they wondered without riticising him. They had confidence in his character.

Opportunities for religious conversation are always at hand. What a chance the disciples had that day! They went up into the village and stirred nobody; Jesus stayed out where only one was and stirred the whole town.

Great results followed this conversation. Acts, chapter eight, cannot be understood apart from John, chapter four. Between the two chapters there is a lively and inevitable connection, for Philip's revival was the outcome of Christ's conversation with the woman at the well.

Wherever there is one fallen woman there are five fallen men. That was the ratio discovered by the findings of the Chicago Vice Commission. They found that commercialized vice could not flourish and continue without the ratio of five men to one woman. That, curiously, was the ratio with the woman at Jacob's Well: she had five lovers, and none of them was her husband.

When a woman falls she falls by what is best in her—the desire to love her best, and trust her best, and give her best; when a man falls he falls by what is worst in him—the desire and determination to fulfil his lust and selfishness, at the woman's cost.

A male degenerate is a greater menace to society than a female prostitute. For her we may have pity; for him only loathing and contempt. A syphilitic society must blame itself for its rottenness—so long as it condemns the woman and condones the man.

Statistics of the Sunday Schools of the World

Released at the Twelfth World's Sunday School Convention in Oslo, Norway, 1936

Continent	*Population*	*Protestant Christians*	*Number of Sunday Schools*	*Number of Teachers*	*Number of Scholars*	*Total Membership*	*1932–1936 Increase Scholars*
FRICA	145,337,216	7,904,514	31,197	81,522	1,587,989	1,669,511	581,721
SIA	1,135,222,608	6,971,124	34,353	107,611	1,778,908	1,886,519	40,199
USTRALASIA	10,317,252	7,147,118	12,833	91,013	884,972	975,985	64,534
UROPE	487,165,814	110,217,875	105,915	794,427	8,636,809	9,431,236	*13,888
ATIN AMERICA:							
Central America and Mexico	23,941,012	257,874	1,222	3,479	78,662	82,141	
South America	90,113,721	1,515,817	5,512	21,956	287,558	309,514	193,566
West Indies, etc.	11,746,401	1,873,216	3,067	19,150	277,680	296,830	
ORTH AMERICA	138,263,968	95,599,302	175,411	2,026,737	20,607,046	22,633,783	28,447
otals, 1936	2,042,107,992	231,486,840	369,510	3,145,895	34,139,624	37,285,519	894,579 (2.75%)
1932	----------	----------	361,145	3,301,784	33,245,045	36,546,829	--------
1913	----------	----------	301,057	2,669,630	27,345,407	30,015,037	--------

NOTE. There are at least 60,000,000 Protestant children under 14 years; probably one-third of the scholars recorded are over 14 years.
* Decrease.

Learning for Life; the New Adult Program

(A SERIES OF FIVE ARTICLES)

By O. G. HERBRECHT, Des Moines, Iowa

I. LEARNING THE LIFE

"When thou hearest the sound of a going in the tops of the mulberry-trees, then thou shalt bestir thyself!" This is what the Lord said to David in the matter of the Ark of the Covenant, which the Philistines had captured. It is the appropriate thing to say just now to the men and women of adult church school classes. If these mature Christians do not mind being called—appropriately?—"tops of mulberry-trees," let them recognize that there is a definite and audible stirring among them.

For some time there has been more or less dissatisfaction in adult Sunday school ranks. Where there is not the restless have probably stopped coming, and those who are left seem satisfied with the mere fellowship appeal of the school. The facts are that adult attendance and activity have in recent years notably decreased, while children's and young people's work have been receiving the bulk of attention.

A new sentiment, however, like a prophetic breeze, is making itself felt. The turn of economic conditions has thrown a sudden block of unexpected leisure time upon millions who are not ready for it. These same conditions are evolving shorter working days. Men and women are beginning to wonder what to do with the free hours. The adult-education movement in the public school is bringing to adults the consciousness for continuing mental development. The growth of the public library and the almost accomplished universality of the radio are stimulating interest in adult self-culture. The increasing practice of newspapers and magazines in submitting economic and political issues to popular, informal ballot is sending men and women to books and classes in order to share intelligently their opinion into the public thinking.

The gradual emergence, in definite shape, of a new economic social order within the lifetime of the present adult generation is stirring men and women to concern themselves lest they be swept without their own volition into the economic vortex. The patent evidence that the old traditional order of the home has already undergone radical changes is causing adults to blink their eyes mentally, if not literally, and wonder what ought to be done about it. The same is true in the alarming increase of youth crime. The average age of first crimes has dropped ten years in the last quarter century. The insistent proddings and pronouncements of science have finally driven out the old holding power of superstition, which was so often confused with religious "faith," so that even adul are wondering whether many of the familiar pio platitudes are as true as once they were thought to b

What an array of dynamic motivations for a ne adult program in the church! Indeed, the church h almost been forced to bestir itself to provide such new program for adults, a sane and sensible progra for this fluid and enlightened day, a program geared its needs; a program positive enough to be constru tive in an iconoclastic generation.

As an initial contribution there has been created b the evangelical Protestant churches a new adult pr gram, denominated "Learning for Life." This pr gram comprises six definite adult interests: the Bib Christian Faith and Experience, Christian Fami Life, the Church, Social Relations, and Leadersh Education.

The goal is fourfold:

1. A working mastery of the Bible.
2. The understanding of life.
3. Personal and group relation to Christian soc action.
4. Progress and balance in personal living.

No official "recognition" has been provided thus f The suggestion is, however, that any local chur desiring to stimulate interest by recognition shall encouraged to experiment with it.

The booklet *Learning for Life* may be obtain from the denominational publishing-houses or fr the International Council of Religious Education. has been prepared by Dr. Harry C. Munro, of t International Council staff, and is concise, comp hensive and helpful.

The subsequent articles in this series will d interpretatively with the four goals. By way of ge eral preparation for those interested in the new p gram, three things should be noted:

1. The program is based on the *life-situati approach.* Starting with the problem to be solved, t class ventures forth in search of knowledge a methods for the solution.

2. The new program is a challenge to the *laity the church.* Without detracting one iota from t high and indispensable function of the ordained m istry, there is returning to the church the conscio ness of the need of lay workers. For the last f years, due somewhat to the pressure of the econo

ituation, the laity have been so immersed in salvaging usiness that there has been less and less time for hurch work by them. An additional cause is, unortunately, within the church. The strong emphasis n encouraging young people by giving them responsiility, coupled with pronounced and implied assertions hat it is time young people be given a chance to succeed where adults have bungled, has caused many men nd women to withdraw to the side-lines. But saneess is returning. We know now that adults are eeded—lay adults. There must come an adult reaissance. And, happily, it is coming, though bringing vith it unavoidably some of the dubious deposit the ears following the World War have left on the shores f social living. It is a distinct challenge to adulthood within the church, to restudy life from its Christian angle, that the force of our faith may serve truly the kingdom of Christ and not spend its strength in subservience to subversive party interests, or political propaganda.

3. The new adult program requires *sincere study*. It will not be easy. So much adult class work is superficial, devoid of real application of mind. While the new program is not "academic"—and therefore frightening—it does demand an earnest investment of the scholar's thought and time. Thank God for that! The church is calling loudly for a revitalized adulthood; men and women who think enough of the Kingdom to "launch out into the deep" for the sake of a greater catch.

Too Many Churches, Too Little Christianity[1]

By MARK A. DAWBER, D. D.

Department of Rural Work, Board of Home Missions and Church Extension of the Methodist Episcopal Church

Poverty in the midst of plenty seems to be the order f the day. This is the case not only in material hings, but also in religion. Perhaps there has been no uestion in religious circles more discussed than that f overchurching. Conference after conference has een held—national, state and regional—to discuss it. Committees have been set up to deal with specific ituations. Principles of comity and cooperation have een worked out. Denominations have gone on record n their national assemblies as opposed to competition nd stating their willingness and determination to ring it to an end. Home mission boards have entered nto agreements. They have surveyed the field toether and are, at this writing, in the process of applyng the "sanctions" to certain projects that by comon consent are a violation of the principles which ave been agreed upon as a basis to determine cometitive fields. Much progress has been made. The ecent effort on the part of six home mission boards o withhold grants from all competing situations is specially encouraging.

Yet notwithstanding all this, competition continues. t is a stubborn problem, the most vicious thing that btains in Protestant church life. Unless greater rogress can be made, and made more rapidly than in ecent years, there is little hope for Christianity in housands of town and country communities—and, it ight be added, some cities. For, let us not deceive urselves, the cities of America are just as great inners in this matter of overchurching as the town nd country.

[1] This is one of a series of articles made available through the International Council of Religious Education as a means of making effective he current emphasis on the community under the slogan "Building ogether a Christian Community."

"The Gates of Hell"

"The gates of hell shall not prevail against it." Thus spake Jesus. If he were here in the flesh he would say the same in regard to the present competitive church situation. The church will not be destroyed from without, but might be from within. In many communities this is exactly what is taking place at the present moment.

As I write these lines I am passing through a little village in Kentucky. From the train I count six church-spires, steeples or towers—whatever you call them. I learn that there are about twelve hundred people in the town, and, what is more, three other churches that I could not see. My informant also advanced the spicy news that the Baptist preacher preached a great sermon last Sunday on "The Perils of Communism." As I glance through the window I get some impressions: sordid, dirty streets; unkempt dooryards; tumbled-down shacks of buildings for homes; not a sign of beauty or civic pride. The preacher preached a great sermon on "The Perils of Communism," did he? But this town has nothing to fear from the Communist. It needs, however, someone to shock it out of its complacency and spiritual destitution, and open its eyes to the possibilities of a more abundant life that is waiting to be achieved, and which the churches of the town have not been able to bring to it. They have been too busy fighting one another to be able to fight with the "devils" of poverty, ignorance and spiritual inertia that are destroying the very people upon whose meager earnings they exist. Under such conditions I can well understand how much easier it is to fight the Communist! He is not around!

All of which leads me to say that in most overchurched towns there is a terrible lack of those forces that go to the building of a strong community spirit. How can a community spirit ever hope to obtain in a town of twelve hundred, with nine church organizations dividing it into sects, "isms," "ists," and other come-outer groups? Wherever the church has failed to develop the wider spirit of fellowship that results in the building of the community it has failed in its basic task. Fewer and better churches are necessary if this objective is ever to be reached.

Future of Youth

Thinking of the young people in these overchurched towns and villages (and I have visited hundreds of them), I am deeply moved at the utter hopelessness of the situation. In most such communities there is nothing that begins to resemble a worthy young people's program. In a few of them the pastors are beginning to see the light and have agreed to get together, rotating their young people's meetings around the churches. In other places the young people have taken it into their own hands and, church or no church, have determined to get together in a single organization. I have known a few of these which are having a desperate time. They have to fight the preacher, the church officials, sometimes their own parents. In a town recently visited, where such a young people's group had organized, they had been denied the use of any one of the three church buildings and were meeting in the Grange hall. The principal of the high school told me that he was willing and desirous to have them use the high school, but that these same church officials were the members of the school board, so he was afraid to suggest it. What hope is there that these young people will have any respect for the church? If religion survives under such conditions, it will be in spite of the church.

An Adequate Salary

An adequate salary for the town and country ministry awaits the solution of the problem of overchurching. The economically more favored groups will not continue to help keep a number of preachers from starving under such conditions. They will contribute toward the salary of an underpaid preacher where he is serving effectively an adequate field, but where the people are too poor to provide sufficient support. The only solution in some places seems to be to starve out the superfluous churches. The tragedy of that is that in the process the people who need religion most are also starved.

Underchurching

The saddest thing about overchurching is the underchurching that inevitably accompanies it. Go out a few miles from most overchurched towns and yo strike the religious "no man's land." The problem not so much one of too many churches as it is one maldistribution; and a lack of planning among t denominations so as to divide the field or serve it a joint program. In a recent survey of Maine t problem of underchurching as an accompanying fact of overchurching was revealed by alarming fac Over one hundred towns and villages in that sta have no church whatever. Three hundred and twent five churches have less than twenty-five members eac Several of the latter will exist side by side in the sam village and the surrounding country will be destitu of religious privileges. Think of the children! Tho sands in these neglected areas of Maine are growi up with no knowledge of God. Such conditions w never be remedied until more vigorous action is tak to deal with the twofold problem of overchurchi and underchurching.

Planning and Strategy

Some constructive system of planning and strate is necessary. From the abundant literature availab it is in order to cite briefly the several principles a processes that have proved their value in dealing wi these difficult problems.

1. As a general rule, to which of course there a exceptions, it requires about two hundred membe under average economic conditions to form an eff tive church. Experience has revealed that ordinar such a membership requires a supporting constituen of about one thousand people. While it is difficult get agreements and arrangements made so as to pr vide the ideal field as here stated, it should be do wherever possible.

2. The next best step in overchurched communit is a survey of the outlying territory looking towa an enlargement of the field and a division of labor a territory. This has worked successfully in some sit tions. The Christian forces of many such commu ties would doubtless respond if they could be giv leadership from the outside to bring them togeth to help reveal the unchurched field and its needs, a to work out a plan to avoid overlapping and competi services and ministry in the town where the seve pastors live. Such a plan could be put into operati without involving federation, organic union, or a of the programs that would require a single chu organization.

The Larger Parish

The "Larger Parish Plan," so-called, has be found valuable in meeting the problems of ov churching and underchurching. Under it a denomi tion or church can justify its existence by working this wider area to be served, and at the same time m

a drastic need and obtain more support. The plan has been found acceptable also for the working out of an interdenominational parish program. Two or more churches, of different denominations, get together on a cooperative basis in a common program, each retaining its identity, but working together toward a single objective, in a service ministry to all the people. Such a plan makes possible a division of labor, with provision for the specialized ministries to children and youth, as well as for the development of a larger social life and community enterprise. Such a program as this is greatly needed in cities as well as in towns, villages and the open country.

How to Proceed

Someone conscious of this need in his own community will ask, "How can I go about it, to get something done?" First, talk about it. Make yourself a nuisance if necessary, until your own church, at least, gets under conviction. Secondly, there are doubtless others in your church and the other churches who feel as you do. Get them together and talk it over. Secure and study materials dealing with the subject. Study your immediate community and its outlying territory. You will need the facts to convince others, as well as to form the basis upon which to build the program. Then, thirdly, a larger representative meeting of the churches and the community might be called. It would be well to have someone from the outside, experienced in this kind of program, who will be able to speak to the group and lead the discussion along the lines of information and conviction growing out of practical experience elsewhere.

The Home Missions Council, 105 East Twenty-second Street, New York City, will be glad to supply further information that would be valuable in such study and adjustments. Or the writer of this article will be happy to give such information.

Why I Teach

By ASA Q. BURNS, Los Angeles, California

For one reason, and one reason only: to win my pupils to Christ. This reason, like a silver coin, has two sides, but it is still one reason and no more. The one side is, first, to win them; the other to keep them going faithfully in the Christian way.

This twofold reason is scriptural. "This is life eternal," the Master said, "that they might know thee, the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom thou hast sent"; "Seek ye first the Kingdom of God," he said again, with the further assurance that all else would fall properly into its subordinate place. Paul asserts that he puts everything else aside as dross for the excellency of the knowledge of God in Christ Jesus. First is the decision for God through Christ, then, "Stretch forward for the high calling of God in Christ Jesus."

Moreover, this twofold reason is vital. Consider the fact that three out of four church-members are led into church-membership through the church school and you see how important it is that I as a teacher should be thoroughly charged with this purpose. Winning others to Christ is the growing-point of the church life, and if you destroy this growing-point for one single generation the church will vanish from the face of the earth. This twofold reason, then, is as important as it is to prevent the church from committing "race suicide."

This twofold reason is also true to life. A friend first won me to Christ—may the soul of that Mother Robins rest in peace, as her memory lives ever green in my heart! Someone else won her first to Christ; and farther back still; and so on back through an unbroken chain of personal contacts, until I can say realistically that one of my spiritual forebears walked the shores of Galilee and was himself won to Jesus by the Matchless Personality.

I think my spiritual sire in that charmed circle of twelve must have been Thomas, so doubting is my own heart at times. Thomas touched some friend and brought him to Christ, that friend welded another link in the chain that has been unbroken until in the course of time a link in that chain included me. Unbroken personal contacts, literal and real, though perhaps not traceable with historical documents, run from my heart back direct to the touch of His hand on my spiritual sire!

Modern, too, is this twofold reason, because it meets the specific requirements of the latest curriculum-makers. In 1918 the National Education Association set forth its famous Seven Objectives for public education, the seventh of which was frankly spiritual. Using the same magic number of seven, our recent authorities in religious education itemize the objectives thus:

1. Personal relationship to God.
2. Acceptance of Christ as Lord and Saviour.
3. Development of Christian character.
4. Growth in Christian service.
5. Loyal participation in the work of the local church.

6. A Christian view of life and the universe.
7. An understanding and appreciation of the Bible.

Note that the first two objectives mean the same one thing, which may be stated simply, "Winning the individual to Christ." And the other five only amplify in detail the task of development in Christian living. There is a value in reducing all these itemized phases to simpler terms; it gives an easier grasp of the meaning of the total effort. I can check my teaching results the easier by this simplified statement of purpose. Whenever I fall short of getting my pupils to experience Christ, each in his own way, as Lord and Saviour, no matter how skilful my classroom procedure, no matter how brilliant my diction, no matter how extensive my knowledge of teaching materials and methods I fall short of my goal, I fail as a teacher.

In these troublous times for youth, confused and distracted as they cannot help but be, there is all the greater need for that unifying force and integrating influence which comes by rooting the personal life first and foremost in the divine Saviour. Occupational prospects are indefinite, economic prospects are clouded, marital prospects unavoidably postponed, and moral distinctions blurred in fact, all the old values are subject to question as never before. Many an adult in these days has had to find bedrock for his soul to protect him against the mighty earthquakes now rocking every human foothold. My students face possible mental disorders in the miasma of such environment, and in my heart I hold the cure for them, just as the apostle of old did when he declared, "I know in whom I have believed, and am persuaded that he is able to keep that which I have committed to him against that day."

Note that I do not teach in order to entertain my students, though God knows I covet such classroom procedure as will make my teaching attractive. Any other than an attractive presentation of my Christ is a false presentation; so my face, my person, my clothes, my classroom, my attitude, my voice, and my words all must be of winsome type.

Nor do I teach merely in order to instruct—believe it or not! The American taxpayer expends three billion dollars annually to have thirty million youths taught by a million instructors in our public schools. But almost any modern teacher will show you by incontrovertible data that a youth can ramble through this entire public school system, from the kindergarten to the end of the junior college course, without gaining much more information than he would have gained in the normal living experiences outside of school. Students under these state-paid teachers are on duty six hours a day, five days a week, forty weeks a school year; or a total of eight hundred clock hours instruction per year, covering normally four solid courses, which means two hundred clock hours instruction pe year on each course. English, running through fou high school years, would thus require eight hundre clock hours instruction for the student in that on course. Nobody can fool me into believing that whe I teach a student for thirty minutes a Sunday, fo fifty-two Sundays a year, a total of twenty-six cloc hours instruction a year, that I am doing any grea amount of teaching of any kind, good, bad, indifferent Why, at the rate of twenty-six clock hours a year i would require over thirty years to do the eight hun dred hours that a high school student puts in o English during a four-year course!

This says absolutely nothing about another hig contrast between my teaching and that of the publi school instructor's. I have inadequate equipment voluntary and even sporadic attendance on the part o my students, with long in-between periods for eas forgetting in a culture none too Christian, whic readily rubs out all I try to write on the life of m students on Sunday.

Yes, of course I have to instruct when I teach, an I have to use the best available teaching materials Moreover, I know that unless my students learn abou the Bible on Sunday from those of us who try sys tematically and regularly to teach it the Bible wil remain an unknown book, though printed by th millions and distributed free world-wide. Its instruc tional materials are unexcelled and its contents hav influenced the character of our Anglo-Saxon cultur so fundamentally that without some knowledge of th Bible you can hardly be called educated. But th same can be said of Shakespeare, virtually, and th teaching of the one may be no more religious, so fa as teaching goes, than the teaching of the other. Al teaching materials and teaching methods are but mean to another end; namely, the winning of my student t the Christian way of life. So great is the Bible—an so great is Shakespeare—that a competent instructo may readily become so engrossed in the subject-matte as to lose sight of the real end of teaching. Whateve the materials used or the methods adopted, don't clou our major objective—or you will never reach th prized goal. And no other objective is so worthy th teacher's highest efforts as bringing his pupils to kno him and follow him, the Teacher of teachers.

THE principal reason why the adult class is an asse to the church is that it is the natural and logical servic institution in the church. Here the pastor should fin a trained group of Christian leaders to assist him in program of evangelism. Here is the group to bear th financial load of the church. Here is the obvious or ganization to represent the church in the community —*Leo. H. McKay, in the "International Journal o Religious Education."*

The Liquor Problem Today

By DEETS PICKETT

Director of the Board of Temperance, Prohibition and Public Morals of the Methodist Episcopal Church

IV. ALCOHOL AND SOCIETY

Suggested Scripture: Deuteronomy 22: 8

The Alcohol Custom as a Social Problem

A typical "Wet" who has never come into contact with a typical "Dry" has a mental picture of the abstainer and certainly of the prohibitionist which is amusing in the extreme. The cartoonist who drew the prohibitionist as a long, lank, sour-faced kill-joy defending the town pump with an umbrella did not produce a caricature in the opinions of many Wets; he simply dragged out the narrow and warped soul of the prohibitionist and exposed it to public scorn.

"Why do you care what I drink?" asked an irritated Wet. As it happened the man he asked was not a member of a church; his attitude was certainly not entirely Christian. He answered: "What makes you think I care what you drink? Drink carbolic acid if you want to, but why do you think that simply in order to serve your inconsequential appetite the state should protect a traffic which seriously injures the production and consumption of really useful commodities, which plagues the taxpayer with the burden of dependency and crime, which is a menace to the public health and public safety, and which throws out of gear the entire machinery of civilization?"

And there you are. The doctrine of "personal liberty" simply does not apply. The man who drinks a glass of beer helps to maintain a custom, an institution, a trade in which hundreds of millions are invested and by which a vast wealth in human and material values is destroyed.

"The so-called personal-liberty argument in behalf of alcoholic drink loses more and more of its force," said an editorial in the *American Brewers' Review.* "Consideration of the public welfare continues to grow and overshadow the rights of the individual. The drink question must be fought out upon the ultimate foundation of morals, hygiene, and social order—in other words, the public welfare."

The Public Problem Presses for Solution

The young man and the young woman who wish today to determine their own attitude toward this public question by the principles of Christian idealism must first realize that it is not simply a minor, relatively unimportant question. The failure to recognize the extent and significance of the problem has been characteristic of many public men throughout our history, including nearly every President. In too many cases they have seemed to feel that all of the trouble arises from the drunkenness of individuals and therefore that the individual must be taught not to drink so much or not to drink such strong liquors.

The liquor traffic tends to enslave not only the individual, but the race and organized society itself, to make men satisfied with improper conditions, to keep them ignorant, to impose upon their fellow citizens the burden of their unfortunate habits. We fail to see the effects of the drink habit and the drink traffic because these effects come day by day and week by week; we forget the drink disaster of today before we contemplate the drink disaster of tomorrow. There is no long casualty roll to startle our attention as the list of killed and wounded startle us in time of war. And yet if a man who had reached the limit of the allotted years of fourscore and ten were able to sit down and examine in detail the careers of the young men and women with whom he had been associated in his youth, the probability is that he would find certainly not less than one-third of them to have suffered seriously in their health and happiness because of drink. All of this takes place under the protection of our social organization. As Jack London said, John Barleycorn was with him in his later years because in the unwitting days of his early youth alcohol called to him from every street corner; he was lured and drawn and driven to the poison-shops by every interest of his developing life.

The First Cost

The first cost, first to be considered but not first in importance, is the cost of the drink itself. The drink consumed annually in the United States costs approximately two billion five hundred million dollars at retail in actual money pushed across the bar or the counter of the liquor-store. All of this is lost; the transaction registers neither the creation nor the exchange of values. It is not a productive expenditure. It is a loss to the grocery-store, the dry-goods store, to the purveyor of legitimate recreation who sends his customers home better fitted to endure the strains and toils of life. It is just as much loss as any other money expended viciously; lost as the money which the highwayman exacts from his victim is lost. It represents loss of raw material, loss of labor, but the direct loss is not the only one. The consequential cost

is certainly as great as the direct cost, if not greater. This consequential loss is represented by the loss of time and efficiency, the loss of human life, the loss of health, deterioration of character, disruption of family units, insanity, poverty, crime. Let us examine these factors in the cost of drink in greater detail.

The Expenditure

The drink expenditure may be properly regarded as a diversion. Presumably if this money were not spent for drink it would be spent for something else or would appear as available capital in the form of savings. If it were spent for other commodities which serve a useful purpose in living, the stimulating effect of the expenditure would be very great, as in fact it was very great at the time prohibition came into effect and ushered the American people into a period of unexampled prosperity. Several years ago Mr. Ochs-Oakes, editor of *Current History,* in a letter to the author said: "Why do you not call attention to the fact that prohibition is responsible for the depression? It gave millions of money to people who were not accustomed to having it and these people instead of investing wisely, speculated, thereby forcing prices ever higher in Wall Street until they toppled because of lack of support in sound values." Mr. Oakes was facetious. Nevertheless there was truth in what he said. Prohibition did bring enormous prosperity to the country and the people did gamble away this prosperity in Wall Street. The argument for a return of the liquor expenditure to legitimate channels remains as strong an argument as it ever was, and to it is added what should be a lasting lesson in regard to speculation.

The Cost in Human Life

Two decades ago E. Bunnell Phelps wrote *The Mortality of Alcohol.* Mr. Phelps was an authority on the subject; he had been somewhat irritated by hearing the claims of prohibitionists that alcohol was responsible for one hundred thousand deaths annually. The estimate, he believed, was too high, and after he had examined the matter in detail he was confirmed in this belief, the figure at which he himself arrived being 65,897 deaths each twelve months. This figure was, as it should have been, immediately accepted by temperance people, but as it was based upon a population of approximately forty million less than our population at the present time, we are now quite safe in assuming that not less than one hundred thousand people in the United States die annually because of drink; indeed a fair estimate might very well be higher because of the increased use of the automobile and other machinery which cannot safely be handled by those who have been consuming alcohol. Watch the clock; every time it records the passage of eight minutes someone has died as a sacrifice to the drink custom, not of alcoholism certainly, but because of alcohol. It has been estimated that 10 to 12 per cent of the deaths from tuberculosis are due wholly or partly to drink; 30 per cent. of the deaths from Bright's disease; 22 per cent. of the deaths from pneumonia; 16 per cent. of the deaths from heart-disease. "It is certain," said Arthur Hunter, chairman of the Central Bureau of the Medico-Actuarial Mortality Investigation, "that abstainers live longer than persons who use alcoholic beverages. Among the men who admitted that they had taken alcohol occasionally to excess in the past, but whose habits were considered satisfactory when they were insured, there were two hundred and eighty-nine deaths, while there would have been only one hundred and ninety deaths had this group been made up of insured lives in general. The extra mortality was, therefore, over 50 per cent., which was equivalent to a reduction of over four years in the average life of these men. For example at age thirty-five, the expectation of life is thirty-two years; in the first year after that age, instead of, say nine persons dying, there would probably be twelve deaths; that is three men would each lose thirty-two years of life; in the next year probably four men would each lose thirty-one years of life, etc. As a matter of fact, many immoderate drinkers would live longer than thirty-two years, but not nearly so many as would live if they had been moderate drinkers and far fewer than if they had been total abstainers from alcohol."

Poverty and Dependency

One of the most pressing of all problems today is the problem of what to do about the individual and the family which cannot quite meet the strain of increasing competition. Many of these people are individuals of great worth. Their dependency is due to illness or other misfortunes which they cannot possibly control. Their homes are in many cases well-organized and pervaded by an atmosphere of affection and social loyalties. These poor we have always with us and our duty toward them is compelling. However the extraordinary years through which we are passing have revealed the presence in our midst of literally millions of people who, because of constitutional defects, are wholly inadequate to the demands of a developing society. They lack character. They are very much inclined to "flop" into the lap of society and wait, sometimes impatiently, to be fed and clothed and supplied with money with which to purchase liquors or indulge other vicious tastes, while their families increase alarmingly. Meanwhile the great middle class, intelligent and industrious, but perplexed by its own problems, is crushed beneath its load. The question is what we are going to do about it; how we are going to save our social structure from collapsing. Certainly one thing that we can do is to eliminate those

factors which create pauperism, which disrupt the family and demoralize the individual. Many years ago the eminent Committee of Fifty found that 37 per cent. of all pauperism and a much larger percentage of "poverty" is due to drink. An investigation of twenty thousand destitute and homeless men in New York showed that 60 per cent. ascribed their own destitution to intemperance, only 17 per cent. to sickness and injury, and 23 per cent. to old age and unemployment. An investigation by the superintendent of a municipal lodging-house in the same city, covering two thousand cases, reported 30 per cent. of the vagrants investigated owed their conditions solely to "excessive" use of alcohol. At the present time a much larger percentage of dependency should be due to involuntary unemployment. Nevertheless alcohol is a complicating factor in an astonishing number of cases of dependency upon public relief. Indeed it seems to figure in almost every case of unworthy dependency.

Personal investigation in the most uninviting portion of our great cities reveals that the abodes of contented dependents are almost always presided over by drinking parents. Abstainers work when they can. When they cannot they are always striving for the opportunity to work.

Drink in Prosperous Homes

Alcohol seems to be almost as much of a mischief-maker among the rich as among the poor. The marital scandals of "the idle rich" indicate that the financially fortunate are not always so fortunate in ordering their personal and family affairs. Suicides, divorces, crimes committed during drunken debauches are even more common on the great streets of America than the columns of our sensational press would indicate. Alcohol is a formidable enemy of home stability; too frequently where it is used high standards around which the family tends to gather in devoted loyalty are lacking. Drink makes for irritability and worse, for disloyalty to the marriage vow, for lack of respect on the part of the children for parental leadership.

The Cost of Crime

It is estimated that crime in the United States costs not less than ten billion dollars annually, directly and indirectly. The influence of drink upon prevalence of crime is difficult to estimate. The Committee of Fifty, to which reference has already been made, estimates that 49.9 per cent. of crime is to some extent due to the consumption of alcohol. Judge William Gemmill, judge of the Chicago Municipal Court, said:

> Booze is the mother of crime. It gives life and sustenance to slums, dives, brothels, gambling-dens, and "pay-off joints." It nerves to his deed the homicide, the stick-up man, the burglar, the thief, and the thug. It fires the brain of the prostitute and the panderer. It feeds and inflames the passions of the weak-minded and the degenerate.
>
> I have tried an army of fifty thousand human derelicts, most of whom were booze-soaked. With faces red and bloated, with eyes dull and languid, with bodies weak and wasted, with clothing foul and ragged, this vast army is forever marching with unsteady step to the graves of the drunkard and the pauper or to the prison and workhouse.
>
> I have looked into the tear-stained faces of a still larger army of fathers and mothers, brothers and sisters, wives and husbands, as they have pleaded for the miserable wrecks that booze has made. I have seen with this army ten thousand pale-faced, hollow-cheeked, ragged, hungry and starving children, cursed by booze.
>
> I have observed that every bandit crew that goes forth to murder starts from a saloon; that every panderer has his rendezvous in a grog-shop; that every den of thieves makes its victims drunk before it robs them; that every house of prostitution has its bar or is in partnership with booze; that every gambling den either is in a saloon or sustains a close relationship with one; that the pickpocket "trust" is housed in a saloon; that the professional bondsmen and character witnesses for thieves and hold-up men are saloon-keepers or bartenders.
>
> Booze has caused two hundred thousand divorces in the United States in the last twenty years and adds twenty-five thousand more to this number every year. It divides more homes, fills more jails, and empties more churches than all other influences combined.

Drunkenness

Certainly there can be no doubt as to the alcohol source of drunkenness. The drunks fill our police courts every morning. In many cases the inebriate appears again and again charged not only with drunkenness but with petty crime. Eventually in all probability he appears charged with more serious crime. Criminals who shock our communities with the peculiarly bestial nature of their offenses almost always have long police records, and these records are invariably studded with the drunkenness charge.

The Conclusion of the Whole Matter

And so our friend who wondered why anyone should be interested in what he drank should be brought to realize that what he drinks is vitally important as a social question. It not only affects his own usefulness to society, his own harmony or disharmony with society, it is a factor in all the problems of poverty and crime, public health and efficiency. The conditions of domestic life, of education, of industrial efficiency and commercial prosperity, of social progress or deterioration are interwoven with the prevalence of the drink custom and with the activities of the vast institution which rests upon it. Our friend himself could afford to drink, perhaps, that is so far as his own standard of living was concerned, but many millions of those who drink because of the prevalence of the custom cannot afford to drink, and the financially fortunate drinker should not indulge in a habit

(*Continued on page 13*)

CZECHOSLOVAK BAPTISTS AT THEIR TWENTY-EIGHTH ANNUAL CONVENTION IN CHICAGO, 1936

This convention commemorated forty years of Czechoslovak Baptist work in America, and it was appropriately held in Chicago, as the First Bohemian Baptist Church of that city—established in 1896—was the nucleus of our denomination's branch among this foreign language group. Upward of three hundred thousand Czechoslovaks live in Chicago, and they have seven Baptist churches. The convention functioned in four divisions—Senior, Women, Young People, and Sunday School. The president is the well-known Joseph Novotny, who not only serves our churches of his language in New York City and Yonkers, but also teaches

tion comprises in all thirty-one churches, with approximately twenty-five hundred members. A creditable monthly, *Pravda*, is published from Berwyn, Ill., and they have a flourishing B. Y. P. U. organization. In 1927 The American Baptist Publication Society published a Czechoslovakian hymn-book for the use of the churches of this group.

(Note. Since the union of the Czechs (Bohemians, Moravians) and Slovaks (of Northern Hungary) in the republic of Czechoslovakia, at the close of the World War, a certain amount of blending is going on between the two peoples, especially in the

Philathea Class
First Baptist Church
Fort Scott,
Kansas

The Philathea Class of the First Baptist Church, Fort Scott, Kansas

This class was organized several years ago by combining two other classes, the Amoma and the Zattu. Mrs. W. V. Dixon has been our teacher for seven years. She is seen in the group picture in the center of the front row. Next to her on the right is Mrs. George Bainum, until recently class president. This office is now held by Mrs. Harry Tallman. The enrolment in fifty-eight, the average attendance about thirty. The class motto is, "Do things!"; the class colors, purple and white; the class verse, Philippians 4:13. The minister of the church, the Rev. LeRoy E. Viets, is seen in the picture standing in the back row. An interesting feature of this picture is the presence of eight sets of sisters, who are grouped in pairs, down the center, from top to bottom. The Sunday school has an enrolment of approximately five hundred with forty-three teachers and officers. The superintendent is J. W. Slaughter. The Fort Scott church has a membership of more than eight hundred.

The Liquor Problem Today

(*Continued from page 11*)

which tends to increase the prevalence of the custom. In millions of families drink takes the first cut in the family income. It decreases the expenditure for rent first, for clothing next, and then for food. It means underfeeding of infants, nervous instability among older children. In the words of Dr. E. L. R. Gould, the family budget of the average wage-earner is not so flexible that liberal expenditures may be made for drink with impunity. So delicately adjusted is the balance that the status of a new generation is largely determined by the quantity of liquor the fathers consume.[1]

Not only the problems arising out of the family unit but the problems arising from racial groups and their interrelations are seriously affected by drinking. It is too often responsible for lynchings and for crimes which cause lynchings. All of these things are social in character and social in their effects; they vitally

[1] Dr. E. L. R. Gould, *The Social Conditions of Labor*.

concern every citizen. They must be socially considered and solutions must be socially reached.

Questions

What are some of the most important cost-offsets to the liquor revenue:

(*a*) Injury to family life?
(*b*) Drink caused sickness and death?
(*c*) Financial and commercial dislocations?

What is the answer, if there is any, to the contention that money spent for liquor is not lost because it is spent again?

How should we test our attitude toward the problem of over-abstinence or indulgence?

(*a*) To serve the convenience of our social adjustments?
(*b*) To serve the safety and development of our own personality?
(*c*) To serve the social good?

How great an increase in liquor consumption could the United States tolerate without social disintegration? [2]

[2] The consumption of spiritous liquors in the fiscal year 1935 was approximately 94 per cent. greater than in the fiscal year 1934.

RECENT BOOKS

Order All Books from The American Baptist Publication Society

Astronomy for the Layman. By Frank Reh. D. Appleton-Century Company. 308 pages. Price, $3.00.

No discipline contributes so many and such effective illustrations to religious teaching as astronomy. For one thing, it deals in magnitudes, eternity and infinity. Then, too, the people of the Bible were star-gazers. Most books on astronomy are either too technical or too childish. This seems to us to be "just right." It tells the general reader a whole lot about this fascinating subject that he will be glad to know and that he cannot easily find in books of reference—and that preachers and Sunday school teachers can put to good advantage. Throughout the book the author makes valuable use of mythological and poetical allusions to the stars. It is excellently illustrated and well-supplied with helpful diagrams and tables. The author was one of the founders of the Amateur Astronomers' Association, and is instructor in astronomy in Hunter College, New York City.

Little-Known Women of the Bible. By Eveleen Harrison. Round Table Press. 135 pages. Price, $1.25.

Miss Harrison is a leader in religious education in New York, and an accredited teacher for leadership-training schools. She makes vivid the customs and the heart-passions of these ancient characters, so that the reader feels a personal companionship with them which holds the interest and proves to be both informing and inspiring. She deals with ten of these little-known women, beginning with Leah, the unwanted wife, and ending with Lydia, the first convert to Christianity in Europe.

Twenty Years Under the Sea. By J. E. Williamson. Hale, Cushman & Flint. 320 pages. Price, $2.50.

Twenty years ago Mr. Williamson took the very first undersea photographs. He tells us here how the idea first came to him; of his failures and successes—they were mostly successes. A fascinating book, with plenty of thrills and excitement. Many pictures, taken from actual photographs, show us what the wonderland beneath the sea looks like.

Streamline Your Mind. By James L. Mursell Ph. D. J. B. Lippincott Company. 1936. 254 pages. Price, $2.00.

Today we are being shown how power can be made more effective by streamlining an engine or car. Doctor Mursell uses this idea with learning—so to speak, streamlining the mind. He explains the principles by which we may acquire skill, physically and mentally; govern the memory and imagination; think effectively, and master language—by applying certain rules to the task of learning and thereby avoiding needless ineffectiveness, lost motion, and hampering resistances.

HUMOR, OLD AND NEW

"How's your farm work coming?"

"Oh, fine! Got the billboard and hot-dog stand painted, and the filling-station stocked full of gas.

The farmer had watched the motorist working on his second-hand car for about an hour.

"What are you looking at?" asked the motorist. "Is this the first motor-car you ever saw?"

"No," was the dry reply, "but it's very much like it."

"I don't see why Senator —— got sore because the *News* announced he was retiring from politics."

"Well, the make-up man by mistake put the article under the heading 'Public Improvements.'"

Lesson Topics for February

February 7. Jesus the Light of the World. John 7:1-9, 41.
February 14. Jesus the Good Shepherd. John 10:1-42.
February 21. The Power of Jesus Over Death. John 11:1 to 12:11.
February 28. The New Commandment. John 12:12 to 13:38.

INTERNATIONAL SUNDAY SCHOOL LESSONS
IMPROVED UNIFORM SERIES
FIRST QUARTER, 1937: THE GOSPEL OF JOHN

AIM. To encourage the student to seek an understanding of the deeply spiritual message of the Gospel of John and to enter into loving fellowship with the Father and His Son Jesus Christ.

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LESSON I. JANUARY 3. THE FACT AND PURPOSE OF THE INCARNATION

John 1: 1-51. (Verses printed, John 1: 1-18)

GENERAL THEME: THE SON OF GOD BECOMES MAN

Prepared by MITCHELL BRONK, D. D.

Devotional Reading for the Opening Service: Philippians 2: 1-11

KEY VERSE: The Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us.—John 1: 14

1 In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God.
2 The same was in the beginning with God.
3 All things were made by him; and without him was not anything made that was made.
4 In him was life; and the life was the light of men.
5 And the light shineth in darkness; and the darkness comprehended it not.
6 There was a man sent from God, whose name was John.
7 The same came for a witness, to bear witness of the Light, that all men through him might believe.
8 He was not that Light, but was sent to bear witness of that Light.
9 That was the true Light, which lighteth every man that cometh into the world.
10 He was in the world, and the world was made by him, and the world knew him not.
11 He came unto his own, and his own received him not.
12 But as many as received him, to them gave he power to become the sons of God, even to them that believe on his name:
13 Which were born, not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God.
14 And the Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us, (and we beheld his glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father,) full of grace and truth.
15 John bare witness of him, and cried, saying, This was he of whom I spake, He that cometh after me is preferred before me: for he was before me.
16 And of his fulness have all we received, and grace for grace.
17 For the law was given by Moses, but grace and truth came by Jesus Christ.
18 No man hath seen God at any time; the only begotten Son, which is in the bosom of the Father, he hath declared him.

A Bible Message for Every Day

Monday. The Light of Men. John 1: 1-9. By flashing divine truth into our minds—as a guiding beacon light on ahead and a lamp to our feet along the way—and, too, He is a light that warms the coldness of our hearts.

Tuesday. The Incarnation. John 1: 10-18. When the Eternal Word became the man Jesus, God was adopting a language easily understandable by all; he was talking to us in the universal human heart's Esperanto, if you will.

Wednesday. The Purpose of the Incarnation. Heb. 2: 9-18. How infinitely much this Incarnate Son of God did for men! Tasting death, for us—bringing us unto glory—sanctifying us with him. Through suffering, yes; but also crowned!

Thursday. The Servant Lord. Phil. 2: 1-11. In the ethnic (heathen) religions we always find the gods making demands upon men. How different Christianity! God's doing, to the limit, for men—the cross—Jesus washing the disciples' feet!

Friday. The Gospel of Life. 2 Tim. 1: 3-14. Paul is saying that this Christian gospel is in its every aspect a living thing; intensely vital; germinal; power-transmissive; and so forever-lasting.

Saturday. Oneness with the Father. John 14: 7-11. This makes him the "Wonderful Saviour"—because it invests him with all the infinite love of the God who is love.

Sunday. Revelation Through the Son. Heb. 1: 1-9. How appropriate is that word "Word" as a designation of Christ! How wonderfully in him God speaks to us—in his life, and cross and resurrection, as well as in his uttered teachings!

At the Threshold of the Lesson

The well-nigh unanimous tradition of the early church and much internal testimony make the apostle John the author of this Fourth Gospel. The church historian Eusebius (A. D. 264-340) quotes Clement of Alexandria (A. D. 190-203) as saying that "John, the last of the apostles, perceiving that the bodily things (of Jesus) had been made known in the (other) Gospels, and being at the same time urged by his friends and borne along by the Spirit, wrote a spiritual Gospel."

It is a mistake to say that John would merely supplement the synoptic Gospels; his writing is complete, original and independent. And yet it is different from the others. "Synoptic," as applied to the Gospels Matthew, Mark, and Luke, means "containing parts that may be brought under the eye side by side as virtually identical." The most careless Bible reader notices that John stands by itself. Here are some of the differences:

SYNOPTICS	JOHN
Jesus' ministry mostly in Galilee.	Mostly in Jerusalem, and at the great feast.
His teaching in short sayings, parables, proverbs.	In longer discourses.
The kingdom of God (or heaven) made prominent.	The person and revelation of Jesus as the Son of God the theme.
Jesus' human nature stands out.	His divine nature.
The objective: That we may know the things that happened in Jesus' earthly career.	"That ye may believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God" (John 20: 31).

The above and other distinguishing characteristics of the Fourth Gospel have been attributed to the fact that its author was a very old man (it is not usual to date it earlier than A. D. 90), looking back upon his walk and talk with Jesus from the vantage-ground of long Christian experience and reflection; "a seer who has lived the Gospel he propounds" (Loisy).

He noticeably gives much space to the closing events of our Lord's life, because when he wrote the church had begun to grasp more clearly than it earlier had the paramount importance of these events in the plan of salvation. "It sets the events of time on the background of eternity" (Iverach).

"Its greatness appears in its inexhaustibly deep teachings, concerning sheep and fold; the Father's drawing of souls to Christ; the dependence of knowledge as to Christ's doctrine upon the doing of God's will; the fulfilling of the commandment of love as the test of true discipleship; eternal life, begun here and now; and God as Spirit, to be served in spirit and in truth" (Baron von Hügel).

We have often been reminded that the Gospels are gospels, and not biographies of Jesus. This is especially true of John. In it we miss many of the most important details of our Lord's career, that are recorded by the Synoptics; but on the other hand it is rich in messages that are very dear to all Christians.

Mrs. Montgomery gives as John's seven keywords: Life, Love, Truth, Freedom, Believe, Witness, World.

The Lesson Before Us

I. The Eternal Word. Vss. 1-5

The Prologue of John's Gospel, these first eighteen verses—printed as our lesson text—are usually called. They are comparable to the overture of a musical composition. In them we find the motif, the purpose, of the Gospel set forth; its content summarized; the life of the Redeemer outlined, not as the other evangelists do it, but from the mystical, religious-philosophical point of view. It is one of the profoundest passages in the Bible, to elucidate which volumes have been written; yet the statements are plain enough and the language Hebraic in its simplicity.

"The Word" (Greek, *Logos*) has here an almost technical signification. It is a designation of Christ in his creative, revelatory, and life-giving capacities (and hence should always be printed with a capital W, as in the Revised version). Our English "Word" is, however, too narrow a term to express all that *Logos* signifies, and repeated attempts have been made to transliterate the Greek word in our English New Testament versions (so Moffatt). Still, the use of Word, following its employment (*verbum*) in the Latin Vulgate, has become almost universal in modern languages; and the term has endeared itself to the entire Christian world.

As a divine title. When we remember that Jesus was a speaker of words, and his message the Word of Life, such a title seems eminently appropriate. The Jews called that activity of God that creates and reveals his *memra,* word. The Targums, for example, speak of Jehovah manifesting himself to Abraham, Jacob, and Moses through his *memra.* In this prologue John declares that this *memra,* Word, is none other than Christ.

Greek philosophy, especially at Alexandria in Egypt and at Ephesus, identified the logos, Word, with order, reason and the pervading world-principle. To the Greeks, and Jews addicted to Greek philosophy, John now declares: Let your groping after God, expressed by your use of this word *logos,* find its realization in our Lord Jesus Christ. John occupies some such position as the apostle Paul did on Mars Hill, and to both Greeks and Greek Jews he proclaims: This mysterious World Power, Messenger, Agent, Spokesman of Almighty God, whom you call unknown, make I known to you!"

II. A New Testament "In the Beginning—God"

The opening words of the Gospel naturally remind us of the first verse of Genesis. John, however, goes farther back than the creation narrative; his "beginning" is timeless. If the historic Christ was deity, if the "Word was God," it follows that he preexisted. Such a teaching must not be confused with a general teaching of preexistence (as in the Hindu religion) which has always been rejected by Christian theology.

"With God" (vs. 1) scarcely brings out the meaning of the original; hence Mrs. Montgomery renders it, "and the Word was face to face with God." Notice how prominent from the very first "life" and "light" are in this Gospel—together with "love." They are favorite keywords of John's vocabulary. He cannot get away from life, light, love; and is always blending them into the one great fact: of what Jesus is to the human race. Moral and spiritual darkness accordingly becomes the writer's background; as also in the Johannine Epistles.

III. John the Baptist. Vss. 6-8

The difference between the divine Word (Christ) and the human John the Baptist is strikingly brought out by the verbs employed: The Word *was;* John *came* (vs. 7), began to be, was sent. The Baptist evidently had a large following in Asia Minor—at Ephesus—where, we assume, our Gospel was written (Acts 19: 3, 4). We have hints that some of his disciples placed him on a parity with Christ, and it would be important to set these persons right, clearly to define the Baptist's place in the Christian economy.

"Witness" (vss. 7, 8) *is another big, characteristic, word in this Gospel,* being found nearly fifty times. It was the divine wish that the people of the regions where the Baptist preached should be led to faith in Jesus, through his witness and agency. "Cometh" (vs. 9) may be connected with either "Light" or "every man." We prefer to apply it to "Light." He came and is ever coming to lighten the sin-dark world.

IV. The Word in the World Vss. 9-13

Because they were his creation (vs. 3) *matter and man* were in a particular sense the Word's "own" ("own things," marg. R. V.). But, alas! the human part that creation received him not (vs. 1 The rejection is sometimes, but we thi erroneously, referred to Jesus' own n tion, the Jews; or even his own fami

There is a note of pessimism he The church is growing, when this Gos was written, but not so fast as mig have been expected; and there is t evangelist's amazement that any shou refuse the glorious privilege of becomi through the Word "children of Go (vs. 12). And the thought is not mere discipleship, but of a more vit intimate relationship: *"to become ch dren of God."* It should be noticed th the correct rendering is "children" n "sons" (so R. V. and all the mode translations).

In verse 13 one of the most promine of Jesus' teachings, according to Joh Gospel is forecasted: Men are bo spiritually into the household of God, i deed; but it is more than a birth; it a filiation. John is contradicting the a sumption of the Jews that descent fro Abraham counts (cf. 8: 33ff., and Jesu conversation with Nicodemus). Unfo tunately there are many besides the Je who futilely seek and claim Godsonsh by other means than this spiritual rege eration. This verse 13 was the text John Bunyan's last sermon.

V. The Word in the Flesh Vss. 14-18

"Dwelt among us" (vs. 14) *is lite ally "tabernacled among us"* (so mar R. V.); "and on him, as on the ten old, rested the Shekinah, or God-pre ence" (Abingdon Commentary; cp. Is 60: 2). Verse 17 contrasts this revel tion in its attractiveness and reality wi the legal system associated with the nam of Moses. For all previous revelatio of God suffered from necessary imperfe tion; only through the Son in intima relation to the Father could the Fathe hood be fully revealed: "He hath d clared him" (Abingdon Commentary).

In Christian art the symbol of t Fourth Evangelist is an eagle, soari with outspread wings above the cloud In these closing words of the prologue indeed mounts to the loftiest heights religious rhetoric, divine philosophy a inspiration. Verse 14 especially is one the most majestic utterances of Ho Writ. It is the story of the Incarnatio told in a single flash of simple, beautif language.

In that last decade of the first centu heresies were springing up (Gnosticism *that denied or explained away the huma nature of Christ.* Such false teachin John refutes with his brief, sweepin affirmation. It has all the more for coming from an evangelist who so pos tively exalts Christ into the Godhead an into the eternal ages. The Word becam not only man, but flesh; assumed t whole of man's nature—a glorified hu manity. Cf. 1 John 1: 22, 23; 4: 1- ("because many false prophets are go out into the world"); 2 John 7.

Practical Questions for Class Discussion

¶ In what senses is Christ "the Word" to you? Do you hear him speaking, as it were, when you read the Bible? Does he frequently speak to you as "the still, small Voice"? Is he God speaking to you, or just an inspired human teacher?

¶ Have you ever, or often, sensed Christ in your life as "the Light"? What does it signify that we usually thus distinguish him in our times of trial, doubt, darkness? Does verse 3 have reference to world conditions at the time of Jesus' coming into the world?

¶ In what ways does Christ lighten all lives—good, bad, and indifferent? (Vs. 9.)

¶ If Christ is the Light, the Light of the World, what practical effect should this have upon our lives—the life of the Christian?

¶ For "power to become" verse 12, Mrs. Montgomery has "right to become"; which rendering would have the most meaning for you? Does "receiving" to you mean getting "power"?

¶ How would you qualify, or interpret, the first part of verse 18? If we have seen Jesus—in faith as the Christian professes to see him—believing in his deity, have we not seen God? (Cf. John 14:9.)

¶ Does this title "the Word," applied to Christ, have any implications for the Christian? Must not he also be the, a, Word, ever speaking, teaching the truths of God?

¶ Notice the several senses in which "word" is used: (a) as applied to Christ—capitalized; (b) any truth from God that comes to man—not capitalized; (c) the word of God, the Bible.

Notes and Comments

"*John's Gospel*—which is one of the most wonderful books ever written—is very valuable in throwing light on Jesus' aim and the deeper meaning of his life and death, as seen through more than fifty years of reflection and discussion among Greek-thinking people."—*Basil Mathews, in "Life of Jesus."*

It was an old Scotch custom to teach children the rudiments of reading from this first chapter of John. It had been so employed with my father by a Wigtownshire mother, and that father, who died when I was a very small boy, gave me my first reading lessons from it; long before I went to school; Sunday afternoons, holding me upon his knee. The simplicity of its Saxon English was suitable, if the subject-matter wasn't. I remember how quickly I mastered "In the," and how slowly "beginning." It was a fine thing, though, to have the divine character of Jesus thus early impressed upon the mind.—*M. B.*

"*The prologue of John's Gospel* is thus a bridge thrown down from eternity into time; and its full significance is that thus the Eternal appears to men."—*Friedrich Niebergall.*

"*The Eternal Logos,* who embraces in the unity of one magnificent concept all the healing, enlightening, personality-building forces which have ever enriched the life of humanity, in any quarter of the globe. It is impossible to be saved outside of this Christ, because there is no saving influence that is not reckoned to be a part of the meaning of the word 'Christ.'"—*W. M. Horton.*

"*It has been reserved for Saint Paul* to proclaim that the deepest principle in the heart of man is faith; it was reserved for Saint John to proclaim that the essential attribute of God is love."—*Dean Stanley.*

TEACHERS' HELPS

In the Men's Class

Charles C. Stillman,[1] Columbus, Ohio

THE SON OF GOD BECOMES MAN

We enter upon a study of lessons from the Gospel according to John; a great book, hard to understand; presenting troublesome questions about authorship and sequence of recorded events.

The purpose of the author is declared by himself (20:31): "These are written that ye might believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God; and that believing, ye might have life through his name." This object he keeps in view throughout, selecting from the life and words of Christ that material which best forwards his design.

[1] Professor Stillman is director of the School of Social Administration in Ohio State University. He is the author of *Social Work Publicity.*

No composition in the whole compass of literature is a more perfect unity. Each word has its own place and helps out the plan. There is not a wasted clause, nor one without significance from the first word to the last.

In the prologue (1:1-14) the idea of the whole is set before the reader. The history of the Incarnate Word, and of the results of the Incarnation, which he means to relate, are here given in essence and in germ. The Word, the Being in whom is life and light, who is God, and through whom God expresses himself, was made flesh and dwelt among men.

John was sent beforehand to prepare men for his coming, and yet when he came to his own, his own received him not. But some believed, and to them he gave power to become the sons of God. The whole Gospel is but an extension of this idea, an exhibition of the actual history of the manifestation of the Son of God, and of the belief and unbelief with which this manifestation was met.

Homer writes of the Egyptian city of Thebes as a city which poured a hundred armies from its hundred gates. John writes of Jesus with an army of witnesses—John the Baptist, Nicodemus, Nathanael, and so on.

The turning-point of the Gospel is in the twelfth chapter. In this chapter it becomes evident that the manifestation of Christ has wrought in some a deep belief in and attachment to his person, which makes it certain that he will be remembered and adhered to; but at the same time unbelief also comes to a head—and no more can be done to convince gainsayers.

Matthew's Gospel defends the thesis—"that it might be fulfilled which was spoken by the prophets." Mark addressed himself to Gentile readers, obviously with an account of what Peter preached. Luke wrote to show the universality of salvation and probably had Gentile readers in mind. John is consumed with a passion to present Jesus as the manifestation and revelation of God in such convincing manner that those who read will find life through his name.

Yet he declares that many will not become convinced. A fog may temporarily shut out the beauties of a landscape, as potentially seen from the top of a mountain; the landscape is there, however. The figure of speech is not at all strained when we say that many people encounter fog-clouded atmosphere when looking toward the hills from whence comes our strength. Can we not see Jesus? Can we not follow along with John in this appealing, convincing account of the things he did and said?

How the Word became flesh and dwelt among us, I do not know. The doctrine of the Logos (Word), as comprehending the reason and expression of God, may become only a metaphysical exercise in the realm of intellect and conjecture.

Follow along with John, as he heaps incident upon incident, till we reach the point where he "tells us how faith grew till it culminated in the explicit confession of Thomas, 'my Lord and my God.'" Then we are ready to appreciate the "stupendous truth" that John elaborates with devotion and reason—all in elegance of language and sanity of presentation.

How clearly the love of John for Jesus the Christ appears in this Gospel. He is entirely and completely and exclusively devoted to this Son of God who became the Son of man. When Cæsar crossed the Rubicon, he said, *Omnia mea mecum porto* ("I take my all with me"). So John, in delineating the history of his Lord, takes his *all* with him. His allegiance he wants to aspire in others: "These are written that ye might believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God; and that believing, ye might have life through his name."

Before My Class of Women

Cora F. Sherwood, Salem, Massachusetts

The Fact and Purpose of the Incarnation

We have just passed another Christmas season when the light in the sky and the song of the angels have brought their uplift again to this world, which so much needs the uplifted look. "Song and light go together. The star gives light; the song gives help and encouragement. Both are needed. The song without light is emotional instability," writes Professor Mackay, of Princeton.

This upward look is one of the encouraging signs in a very confused world. A great number of serious, outstanding people are looking upward. If a person knows the road he does not need to look up, but if he is lost, it is a different story. They tell us that in the big storms of sand on the desert men have to give up marching and make camp and wait for the stars to come out. Then they can find their way, by the fixed stars. We need a fixed star to guide us today. So it is fitting that the lessons for the beginning of the new year should continue the thought of the Christmas season. It will be a "Happy New Year" for us all if we live it in the light of the Star and with the help and encouragement of the Song.

1. *Christ the Creator.* We need to look up to Christ as one who made the world. We have been living in a man-made and man-centered world for so long that we need this lesson. For the last four hundred years, and especially for the last one hundred, our education and interest have been on man—grown-up and child—and the things that man could do or be taught to do. Jesus said to Peter, "Your outlook is not God's, but man's." So we see that even in Jesus' time men had their attention centered on themselves. Perhaps one of the greatest things our adult Bible classes can do this new year is to help center our own thoughts, and in a measure those of others, on God and Christ, and what they are, rather than on men and what they do. It was no idle dream of a primitive people, who thought they could build a tower that would show they were as powerful as God.

Man has been trying to build a world in the interest of man. And look at the confusion! We have not been putting enough emphasis on God, and on explaining to people God's plan for the world. Because the church failed to keep itself God-centered in Russia there arose a flaming antagonism to its religious teaching and practice. We find the same thing in Turkey and Mexico, and more recently in Spain. Many serious thinkers today see in communism and Fascism God's scourge, punishing the church for her sins and failures. In this lesson on "Christ the God-man" let us make our first emphasis on him as Creator.

2. *"The Word became flesh."* This is thought by many to be the greatest saying in the Bible. The Jerusalem Conference pronounced, "The message of Christianity is Christ." If we think seriously we shall understand that it is supremely in people that God does reveal himself. In nature we see what he has done, but it is only in people we see what he is like. Over and over again in the Old Testament we find God designated as the "God of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob"—that is, the God of people. To know God we must learn of him through people, not through sunrises and sunsets. Jesus Christ is God's thought, his idea, his plan and purpose put into a human body so that we can understand them, and him.

3. *"The law was given by Moses; grace and truth came through Jesus Christ."* Some things that are very important man can do, but the supreme things in life are for Deity alone. Even with Deity it cost something. God gave, Christ suffered. It meant something to them to bring grace and truth into the world. It will cost something to us, and mean something to us, if we live the life of God today. To adore God as we sit before him in speechless wonder; to remember him in meditation; to speak to him in communion; to feel that God is God; all these mean that we behold his glory. We see him as God, whether he be the Father or the Son. We put so much emphasis on things that we can see, touch, handle and count. We forget that these are only temporary—today here, tomorrow gone. The really valuable things in life are those which we cannot see, touch and count.

Dear Father, help us to be willing to live by the grace and walk by the truth that came into the world when Christ came!

The Lesson Lived

Susanna G. Fisher

The Life and the Light

And the life was the light of men (John 1:4).

If there's any finer and more inspiring truth than that in the whole universe, I want you to tell me by telegraph and cable; don't wait to write. I'll pay the freight. That is what the world needs, isn't it, more of the kind of lives that are luminous, more of the examples that are consistent and steady? I say to myself sometimes, "You are too much like a flash-light." Sometimes when I switch on the battery of my flash-light there isn't a flicker of light. I shake it, and pound it, and screw the cap on tighter; and in a little while I coax it to shine. Maybe the bulb had become partly unscrewed. Maybe the contact with the "ever-ready" batteries was poor in some other way. And I pray, "O my God, screw up my life tight; keep it ever in perfect contact with the ever-ready battery which replenishes men's souls." —*J. F. Cowan, D. D.*

No Handle on the Door

As many as received him (John 1:12).

After Holman Hunt had finished his great picture of the "Light of the World," he asked a fellow artist to come and give his opinion on it. As is well-known, the picture depicts the Saviour standing with a lantern in one hand, and knocking with the other at an ivy-mantled door. The artist looked at it for some minutes and then exclaimed: "Why, Hunt, you have made a great mistake. There is no handle on the door! How can the Saviour enter without a handle?" "I have made no mistake," replied Hunt; "the handle is inside." The Saviour can never enter until the door is opened by the sinner's own hand.

The Fact of the Incarnation

The Word was made flesh (John 1:14).

Whatever our growing wisdom learns that is marvelous about the past history of our planet, of the tremendous forces that have been at work upon its structures, and the strange, splendid deeds that men have done upon its surface, this one event in its long life—that God came here, that divine feet trod upon its ground, and a divine voice spoke with its breath—must forever stand out bright and high above everything. Just as in an old nobleman's palace, where all kinds of life have flowed along for centuries where men and women have lived and loved and worked, been born, married and died, where splendid deeds have been done and splendid lives been lived, there still shines out above all others one day centuries ago, when a king was its guest so in the world's history there can be no time to compare with that in which divinity came here. The whole world that knows about the coming dates its whole life from it. Such is the splendor and importance of the advent of Jesus Christ.—*Phillips Brooks.*

In the Beginning

The Word was God (John 1:1).

In the beginning—God; in creation—God; through the ages—God; and God is good. God in his world, God in his Son, God in the hearts of men—this makes nature beautiful, brings Christ nearer and makes man divine, God is "closer to us than breathing, and nearer than hands or feet." Are we in our thoughts, our ambitions, our ideals as near to him? If not, what is the trouble and what is the remedy?—*Unknown.*

Live Christ!—and all thy life shall be
A highway of delivery—
A royal road of goodly deeds,
Gold-paved with sweetest charity.

Live Christ!—and all thy life shall be
A sweet uplifting ministry,
A sowing of the fair white seeds
That fruit through all eternity.

—*John Oxenham.*

Lesson II. January 10. NEW LIFE IN CHRIST

John 2: 1 to 3: 36. (Verses printed, John 3: 1-17)

General Theme: NEW LIFE IN CHRIST

Prepared by Mitchell Bronk, D. D.

Devotional Reading for the Opening Service: Psalm 51: 7-13

KEY VERSE: Verily, verily, I say unto thee, Except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God.—John 3: 3

1 There was a man of the Pharisees, named Nicodemus, a ruler of the Jews:
2 The same came to Jesus by night, and said unto him, Rabbi, we know that thou art a teacher come from God: for no man can do these miracles that thou doest, except God be with him.
3 Jesus answered and said unto him, Verily, verily, I say unto thee, Except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God.
4 Nicodemus saith unto him, How can a man be born when he is old? can he enter the second time into his mother's womb, and be born?
5 Jesus answered, Verily, verily, I say unto thee, Except a man be born of water and of the Spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God.
6 That which is born of the flesh is flesh; and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit.
7 Marvel not that I said unto thee, Ye must be born again.
8 The wind bloweth where it listeth, and thou hearest the sound thereof, but canst not tell whence it cometh, and whither it goeth: so is every one that is born of the Spirit.
9 Nicodemus answered and said unto him, How can these things be?
10 Jesus answered and said unto him, Art thou a master of Israel, and knowest not these things?
11 Verily, verily, I say unto thee, We speak that we do know, and testify that we have seen; and ye receive not our witness.
12 If I have told you earthly things, and ye believe not, how shall ye believe, if I tell you of heavenly things?
13 And no man hath ascended up to heaven, but he that came down from heaven, even the Son of man which is in heaven.
14 And as Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, even so must the Son of man be lifted up:
15 That whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have eternal life.
16 For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life.
17 For God sent not his Son into the world to condemn the world; but that the world through him might be saved.

A Bible Message for Every Day

Monday. The Necessity for the New Life. John 3: 1-8. Most men sense that need, at least sometimes, at least in their best moments; dream of a different, better self. Didn't Nicodemus?

Tuesday. Attaining the New Life. John 3: 9-17. Then it is not so difficult a matter; for it is something that God does for us, largely. That is why we do not understand the "process"—"I *was* blind, *now* I see."

Wednesday. The Gospel of Salvation. Rom. 1: 8-17. The heathen world to which Paul was an apostle thought that the "power unto salvation" (vs. 16) belongs to men. No, he says, this gospel says—as Jesus told Nicodemus—God, the Spirit, does it.

Thursday. The Victory of Love. 1 John 5: 1-5. Love the pathway and door to faith! Yet we are so slow to believe that! We try to attain faith in almost every other way.

Friday. A New Creature. 2 Cor. 5: 14-21. Margin of the Revised version has, "a new creation." This rendering the better brings out Jesus' word to Nicodemus: Not made over: "Ye must be born again." And Paul: "Not I, but Christ that liveth in me."

Saturday. Living in Christ. Col. 3: 1-11. If I abide with Christ, and so live that he can dwell in and with me, I may have the assurance that I am God's true child (cf. 1 John 2).

Sunday. Growing in Grace. 2 Peter 3: 14-18. You can put it either way: "grace" ("blessing") widens our knowledge of Christ; increased knowledge of him adds new supplies of the "grace of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ."

At the Threshold of the Lesson

Jesus was just beginning his public ministry. He had come down to Jerusalem for the Passover. Miracles that he wrought had made a deep impression on Nicodemus—perhaps he had heard of the Cana miracle—who would know more about this wonderful teacher and his doctrine. John seems to convey the idea that Nicodemus was afraid openly to seek the interview. Those words "by night" have acquired an ominous signification. We always refer to people who through timidity hesitate to confess Christ as "by night," or "Nicodemus," Christians. And this view accords with the other references to Nicodemus in our Gospel.

Maybe Nicodemus wasn't cowardly at all. He may have sought Jesus "by night" because it was a quieter, better time for such a colloquy. The conference is always pictured in the open, on a housetop. John was present, we may suppose; perhaps other disciples.

Nicodemus was a Pharisee, a member of the council, the Sanhedrin, and an old man (3: 4). John alone of the evangelists refers to him; and in two other places: where Nicodemus pleads with the council for fairness in their treatment of Jesus (7: 50-52); and where he associates himself with Joseph of Arimathea—another sub rosa disciple—in caring for Jesus' body after the crucifixion (19: 38-40).

Desire for truth and the fear of men mingle in his character. We have every reason for believing, however, that the interest in Jesus recorded here slowly but surely developed into a lively and bold faith. The crucified Jesus won some hearts that had shut themselves against the living, teaching Jesus. We are grateful, anyhow, for his pious honoring of the sacred body that had been rescued from the cross. One of the Apocryphal gospels is ascribed to his later years.

Jesus turns aside Nicodemus' polite flattery and recognition of his wonderful power. That isn't the point, he says. Such admiration and reverence never save a man, never bring him into the kingdom of God that I have come to establish. Regeneration is what is needed; what you, Pharisee and councilman, need.

The newer translations of the New Testament prefer "born from above" to "born anew." Either rendering is possible from the Greek word, and indeed both expressions have the same implication; for to be born anew, this time with a spiritual regeneration, is, of course, to experience a from-above, heavenly, second birth.

The Lesson Before Us

I. The New Birth

The Gospel of John takes us rapidly into the very heart of Jesus' gospel. The good wine is not kept until the last. We are only in chapter 3, but we have now had set before us three big, essential doctrines of our faith: the Incarnation, the Atonement ("Behold the Lamb of God!"), and Regeneration. The new birth implies many things. To enter upon the Christian life you must go back and start all over again. It precludes half-way reformation; no patching up here! Paul had grasped Jesus' meaning: "if any man is in Christ, he is a new creature (creation)." And in especial it must be not simply a new birth, but a spiritual new birth, from above, divine in a deeper sense than physical parturition.

Jesus is contrasting the Pharisee Nicodemus' reliance upon his birthright in Israel for salvation. But that first birth

is insufficient. Physical descent doesn't count in the real kingdom of God. The passage of Scripture before us is therefore a pivotal one for those branches of the church that stress conversion and the "experience" of religion. Nicodemus' objection in verse 4 was evidently intended to draw out Jesus to further discussion. Compare the questions of the woman at the well of Sychar—"From whence then hast thou that living water?" (John 4:9, 11.)

II. "Of Water and of the Spirit"

These words have given rise to much controversy. By some they are held to teach baptismal regeneration, water baptism as a saving ordinance. It is one of the proof texts of this tenet. We, however, understand "born of water" to mean the removal by cleansing, figuratively, of the old sinful life (John's baptism of purification, "of repentance unto the remission of sins"); "born of the Spirit," the impartation by the Holy Spirit of a new and holy principle of life. This is an actual experience of every true Christian life.

The ordinance of baptism as such is not referred to, but the truths which that ordinance expresses: sin-forgiveness and removal, through Christ's death, and the new life which fellowship with Christ imparts. In verse 6, Jesus adds: only the Spirit can make the flesh, humanity, spiritual; and only the spiritually enlightened understanding can grasp these truths.

III. Not How, but the Fact

Nicodemus, as a Pharisee, was a literalist and a good deal of a materialist; slow to grasp spiritual truths. The Spirit accomplishes this new birth, says Jesus, and the works of the Spirit are always mysteriously brought about, though very evident in their results. He uses the wind in illustration.

In both Greek and Hebrew the same word is used for wind and Spirit. The sound of it and the things that it does and undoes are very much in evidence; but little you know about how and why and whence and whither it blows. Can't you, Nicodemus, catch the point of my teaching about regeneration? And you a reputed teacher of religion! Then Jesus solemnly—notice how "verily" is repeated—declares his own authority as a teacher, which Nicodemus perhaps had slighted. I know about these things and I alone, for I have been up there in the spirit world with God.

IV. "Lifted Up." Vs. 14

The symbolism of the serpent in the wilderness must not be exaggerated. The beholding is the main factor in both terms of the comparison. "If a serpent had bitten any man, when he looked unto the serpent of brass he lived" (Num. 21:9). "There is life for a look at the Crucified One." It is faith in a Christ lifted up upon a cross that gives eternal life.

V. "John 3:16"

"The whole gospel in a nutshell," John 3:16 has been called. "Infinite riches in a little room"; "The best thing ever put into human speech." It is such a precious verse for most Christians that one hesitates to comment upon it. Suffice to say, it measures the immeasurable love of God: its breadth and length and height and depth (Heb. 3:18). It was a difficult word for Nicodemus, for he—the Jews—thought: God so loved Israel—not the entire world.

Notice that the R. V. correctly gives "eternal life" in this verse, as in the preceding. The same Greek word is employed in each instance. Hovey defines eternal life: "a blessed state of being begun on earth and continued forever." As applied to God it means having neither beginning nor end. John uses the expression many times. Some have thought that the eternal life spoken of here is a future possession. Jesus seems to teach, however, that it begins for the believer here and now. Eternal is a larger, more appropriate word than everlasting.

Christ is inevitably the world's judge. But this was not the purpose of his coming into the world; it was salvation. The statement therefore does not contradict Jesus' declaration of 9:39. "He that abides in faith in Christ abides in a state to which judging belongs not; whilst the faith remains, the idea of judgment is excluded, for the believer is one with the Lord in whom he has placed his trust. Not so with the unbeliever; on him the sentence of judgment is already pronounced. As long as the unbelief is persisted in, so long does the sentence which the rejection of Jesus brings with it remain in force against him" (Milligan-Moulton).

Practical Questions for Class Discussion

¶ Is not reticence in regard to religious matters natural? Do not most Christians dread to speak to even their intimates about their "soul's welfare"? How do you explain it? How may we overcome it?

¶ In contrasting "the material" and "the spiritual" how may we gain a clearer idea of what is meant by "the spiritual"? What other helpful illustrations of the spirit, spiritual, are found in Scripture?

¶ How does faith come into play in discerning spiritual truth? Apply John 15:17. Consider also the importance of righteous character, and Matthew 5:8.

¶ When Jesus speaks of the kingdom of God (vs. 5), what would Nicodemus understand by the expression? What did Jesus himself mean by it?

¶ Nowadays becoming a Christian is often referred to as a gradual process; the idea being that the boy or girl in a Christian home and Sunday school grows up into it. Does this leave room for the "new birth"? How?

Notes and Comments

"There are many kinds of believers whose history we find among the early converts to Christianity. There was the magistrate whose social position was such that he preferred a private interview in the evening with the Teacher to following him with the street crowd. He had seen extraordinary facts which had satisfied him that the young Galilean had a divine commission. But still he cross-questioned the Teacher himself. He was not ready to accept statements without explanation. That was the right kind of man. See how he stood up for the legal rights of his Master when the people were for laying hands on him."—*Holmes.*

When someone recommended an expensive medicine to Luther for the cure of the pain in his head, he replied, "My best prescription is John 3:16." Several times he repeated in Latin this verse as he was dying.

A student visited Karl Theodor Keil, the famous biblical scholar at Zurich. The old professor was ill and in bed. He picked up a New Testament and said, "Young man, this little book contains all wisdom." Then, opening it at John, the Gospel, "And this part of it all the wisdom of the book." Placing his long bony finger on 3:16, he continued: "And this verse all the wisdom of this Fourth Gospel."

TEACHERS' HELPS

In the Men's Class

Charles C. Stillman, Columbus, Ohio

New Life in Christ

Harold Begbie tells of the conversion of a man he describes as the "lowest of the low," a sunken and degraded soul: "I had watched the Puncher's life, I had seen it running clean and straight; and I resolved all of a sudden that if God could do such a miracle as that, I would 'have a cut at it too.' (The Puncher was a vicious character who had turned to God and righteousness from a rotten and wicked life.) The diction is of the smallest moment. The man's desire to 'have a cut at it,' translated into the most wistful phrasing, an exquisite mysticism, would still beg the words. *The desire was the miracle. It was a movement of the soul in the spiritual sphere.* When he felt a longing to try religion, his soul said, 'I will arise and go to my Father,' and he

come to himself. His mind, blundering with words and concerned with material things, must not obscure for us the hidden movements of his spirit waking from death, turning to the light and desiring rest. This man, with all his abomination thick about him, was subliminally moving toward God. Whatever the spring of his desire, whatever the cause of his awakening, he desired to be better; that is to say, he turned his face to the light."

The "lowest of the low" was born again.

The new birth is a mystery. Jesus said so to Nicodemus. You hear the wind blow, but you do not know where it comes from or where it is going. All that you can do is to judge it by its effects.

Human life is adaptation to the physical environment into which the human is brought by his birth. Jesus is telling Nicodemus that the possibilities of the spiritual life will never be realized until the Spirit of God acts upon the life by a new quickening power—that is obviously what happened to the "lowest of the low."

In a class in systematic theology many years ago I heard Dr. Augustus Strong ask the question, "In the case of conversion, which acts first, the man himself or the Spirit of God?" "Wrong," said Doctor Strong, as the student answered that the man's own will was the first stirring. The Spirit of God, according to the beloved doctor, was the inspiration. And Jesus puts the truth to Nicodemus: "I tell you, if a man does not owe his birth to water and Spirit, he cannot get into the kingdom of God. Whatever owes its birth to the physical is physical, and whatever owes its birth to the Spirit is spiritual."

For some reason or other I do not develop any enthusiasm about Nicodemus. A reading of the verses immediately preceding the story of the conversation between this Pharisee and Jesus leads us to believe that Nicodemus was drawn to Jesus by the miracles. Dr. J. S. Riggs, in commenting upon this text, refers in a marginal note to "Jesus' distrust of a sign-begotten faith." He says further that "a faith begotten by miracles is the faith of Nicodemus."

Maybe he was genuinely seeking light, but at any rate Nicodemus went to Jesus under cover of darkness. Doctor Riggs thinks that Nicodemus approached Jesus with a patronizing tone. In what frame of mind he left the great Teacher I do not know. That he was perplexed about the heavy teaching to which he was submitted can readily be believed. Let us hope he was genuinely seeking light, and went away convinced.

The beautiful verse of John 3:16 seems not to be a part of the conversation between the member of the Sanhedrin and our Lord, but is the comment of the writer of the Gospel, with his deep and spiritual understanding of the life and messages of the Son of God who became the Son of man and lived among us as a divine revealment.

The implications of the significant words of Jesus, as recorded in the Key Verse for the day, are plain enough: You must be spirit-born. Your respectability is not enough. Your ecclesiastical status is no touchstone. You may not be able to syllogize it all, but you must be "born over again from above."

Before My Class of Women

Cora F. Sherwood, Salem, Massachusetts

New Life in Christ

In the long list of Jesus' talks to individuals the two we have for this lesson and next Sunday's come near the top.

Very different in social standing were these two persons, yet that seemed to make little difference to Jesus.

Whether Nicodemus came to Jesus because he was personally interested in the man who was making such a stir in Palestine with his miracles, and more recently with the cleansing of the Temple, or whether he came as a delegate from the official Jews matters little. A man and his wife were drinking orange-juice for breakfast when he remembered that some friends had sent them a box of oranges from Florida. He remarked, "What good juice these Florida oranges make!" "But," said his wife, "these oranges are from California. The others are all gone." "Well," was the man's reply, "the main thing is the juice." So the main thing in this lesson is the teaching, regardless of why Nicodemus came.

There is a great appeal, especially to a woman, in new things. One of my friends says that when she gets terribly blue and discouraged, and life doesn't seem worth living, she goes down-town and buys a new hat. Not all women can do that, but we all can get new ideas; and they will do for us what no number of new hats or other things could accomplish. Last week we studied about the new idea of God which came with Christ. This week we have an account of the new life as it comes to men through him.

1. God's *must*. In recent months—previous to my writing this article—there has been much emphasis on "must legislation"; meaning that the President has designated certain bills which *must* be passed by the Congress. Here we have something called imperative by a higher power than any earthly official. Here, if anywhere, is "the divine imperative." We may try to sidestep it, as did Nicodemus, but again and again it comes to us.

We *must* be made over. Man is a sinner. Can we doubt that when we see so much that is wrong in the world? There is a lack of keeping faith among individuals, in our own country and in the world at large. There is a lack of work and food. We have learned how to raise plenty of food, but men will not allow people to have it for use. Not God's niggardliness, but man's sinfulness, is keeping half the world on less than subsistence rations.

The books written by psychologists show us that the inner life of people has become a house of horrors. If you look at your own heart, or at the lives of other people, you *know* that man needs to be remade, or born again. You may not be able to understand it all, but you are sure of the need of it. It presses home to each one of us. If this is to be more than an interesting story in a much-loved Book, we must face the challenge for ourselves of this new life. Have we accepted it, or are we, like Nicodemus, "passing it up"? God's *must* means there is a difference.

2. *Belief in the uplifted Christ.* "A white man zigzagging through the African forest came to that crucial place in African life, a cross-road. An elderly woman was earnestly talking to a younger one. She was, he discovered later, giving a parting message to her daughter, who was setting out on a long journey. He was deeply impressed with the words he heard, and after the leave-taking was over the white man asked the older woman what she had said to her daughter. She repeated the words, which, literally translated, mean, "It is God who gives beauty, but we must help him." The old mother was telling her daughter that God had given her beauty and she must help him by guarding it as a sacred treasure.[1]

The power of the uplifted look has yet to be fully tested to its full strength. Jesus said that whosoever believes in him may have eternal life. In these times people have been looking at other things for satisfactions, to themselves and the things they have made. Most of our troubles are due to this fact. We have not been looking to the crucified Christ, the One who loved greatly and served mightily. We have been seeking things, not salvation. We have something to do in this matter of a new life in Christ to look away from ourselves and to him. God has given us the chance. We must use it.

Seeking and Finding

He that believeth on the Son hath everlasting life (John 3:36).

Rev. F. W. Boreham points out that the story of Francis of Assisi's conversion and that of Rev. Charles H. Spurgeon's are almost identical. Both men realized at a critical moment of life the futility of worldly living and earnestly sought and found Christ. The two conversions took place in different lands, and removed from each other by six hundred years, yet as each told his experience of seeking and finding Christ the striking thing is their similarity. The human heart is much the same in all ages, and earnest seekers will not be disappointed.—*Rev. Archer Wallace.*

[1] Adapted from *Consider Africa*, by Basil Mathews.

Lesson III. January 17. JESUS MEETS OUR DEEPEST NEED

John 4: 1-54. (Verses printed, John 4: 7-26)

General Theme: JESUS THE WATER OF LIFE

Prepared by Mitchell Bronk, D. D.

Devotional Reading for the Opening Service: Romans 8: 26-32

KEY VERSE: Whosoever drinketh of the water that I shall give him shall never thirst.—John 4: 14

7 There cometh a woman of Samaria to draw water: Jesus saith unto her, Give me to drink.

8 (For his disciples were gone away unto the city to buy meat.)

9 Then saith the woman of Samaria unto him, How is it that thou, being a Jew, askest drink of me, which am a woman of Samaria? for the Jews have no dealings with the Samaritans.

10 Jesus answered and said unto her, If thou knewest the gift of God, and who it is that saith to thee, Give me to drink; thou wouldest have asked of him, and he would have given thee living water.

11 The woman saith unto him, Sir, thou hast nothing to draw with, and the well is deep: from whence then hast thou that living water?

12 Art thou greater than our father Jacob, which gave us the well, and drank thereof himself, and his children, and his cattle?

13 Jesus answered and said unto her, Whosoever drinketh of this water shall thirst again:

14 But whosoever drinketh of the water that I shall give him shall never thirst; but the water that I shall give him shall be in him a well of water springing up into everlasting life.

15 The woman saith unto him, Sir, give me this water, that I thirst not, neither come hither to draw.

16 Jesus saith unto her, Go, call thy husband, and come hither.

17 The woman answered and said, I have no husband. Jesus said unto her, Thou hast well said, I have no husband:

18 For thou hast had five husbands; and he whom thou now hast is not thy husband: in that saidst thou truly.

19 The woman saith unto him, Sir, I perceive that thou art a prophet.

20 Our fathers worshipped in this mountain; and ye say, that in Jerusalem is the place where men ought to worship.

21 Jesus saith unto her, Woman, believe me, the hour cometh, when ye shall neither in this mountain, nor yet at Jerusalem, worship the Father.

22 Ye worship ye know not what: we know what we worship: for salvation is of the Jews.

23 But the hour cometh, and now is, when the true worshippers shall worship the Father in spirit and in truth: for the Father seeketh such to worship him.

24 God is a Spirit: and they that worship him must worship him in spirit and in truth.

25 The woman saith unto him, I know that Messias cometh, which is called Christ: when he is come, he will tell us all things.

26 Jesus saith unto her, I that speak unto thee am he.

A Bible Message for Every Day

Monday. The Water of Life. John 4: 7-15. The refreshment that it brings is not just a passive good-feeling, but also an energy to service (vs. 14).

Tuesday. Wells of Salvation. Isa 12: 1-6. It is said that the people who resort to the famous medicinal springs for treatment are usually desperate cases. The Water of Life—of Jesus—is peculiarly adapted to the grievously sin-sick.

Wednesday. The Gracious Invitation. Isa. 55: 1-7. This is a good gospel message. Jesus is ever there at the well. And we are to echo, sound abroad the invitation, "Ho, every one! Come! our God will abundantly pardon!"

Thursday. Come and Drink. John 7: 37-44. The most harrowing stories one can read are of desert travelers dying of thirst. What a magic word, then, should "Come, drink of the Water of Life!" be to our world in its so desperate need.

Friday. The Nourishing Christ. John 6: 52-59. It is illustrated by the fact that the Christian who does not cultivate intimacy with Christ, and constantly engage in Christian service, soon wastes away spiritually, backslides and drifts apart from his Lord.

Saturday. "Whosoever Will." Rev. 22: 16-21. The arms of the cross reach out infinitely wide. There is room there for all and everyone. "There's a wideness in God's mercy like the wideness of the sea." Jesus' "Whosoever" is the biggest, most blessed, most wonderful word ever spoken.

Sunday. True Worship. John 4: 16-26. Jesus does not here condemn the forms, the accessories, of worship; but insists that of themselves they are useless —when the soul does not make contact through them with the spirit of God.

At the Threshold of the Lesson

Samaria will originally have been identical with the Northern Kingdom. The city—built by Amri for a capital (1 Kings 16: 24)—gave its name to the whole north country. In the New Testament, however, Samaria is simply the middle region between Judea and Galilee. It is one of the most beautiful parts of Palestine, mountain and hill, valley and plain; and in Jesus' day, at least, very fertile.

The Samaritans were a people of mixed blood, descendants of the colonists who had been brought from Assyria to take the place of the Jews carried into captivity and of native Israelites who had not been expatriated. These latter were the preponderating element and had imposed their religion on the others. There had been intermarriage and blending.

In language and religion the Samaritans were Jews; but their worship was simpler than that of Jerusalem and they had less regard for the Law. "Regular" Jews looked upon them as decidedly "irregular"—bastard Jews—and would have nothing to do with them. The bitter hatred between the two peoples became proverbial (Ezra 4: 1ff.; 2 Kings 17: 24ff.; John 8: 48).

Mount Gerizim is nearly three thousand feet high and its cliffs overhang the pass where Jacob's well is located (Deut. 11: 29; 27: 12; Joshua 8: 33; Judges 9: 7). Mount Ebal on the opposite side of the valley is its twin hill. The Samaritans confuse Gerizim with Jerusalem, making it the place of the interrupted sacrifice of Isaac and of the meeting between Abraham and Melchizedek. A handful of Samaritans still inhabit Shechem. They celebrate the Passover on Mount Gerizim, and possess a famous copy of the Pentateuch. Their temple, erected 432 B. C. and destroyed long before the time of our lesson, could not have been very pretentious. Its ruins are still pointed out.

The Lesson Before Us

I. Opportunity and Approach

This incomparable story of Jesus and the woman at the well is one of the best illustrations in the New Testament of what we term personal evangelism. It sets forth many things of which we need to be reminded in the matter of the approach to the individual sinner. First of all:

Jesus improved the opportunity. The most of us, if we had been sitting there on that well-coping, wearied—as it says our Lord was from a long walk in the hot sun of early summer—would have leaned back and dozed, scarcely noticing that woman. But as Christians, following the example of our Saviour, we can't be that way; can't let such opportunities go by. We must overcome the weak flesh and our love of ease and our laziness, when they come between us and chances for Christian service; soul-winning; yes, and the worship of God. Again,

Jesus disregarded ceremony and caste. The sinner in this case was not only a woman, but a Samaritan woman. The etiquette of the time and land was strict in the matter of the mingling of the sexes (vs. 27), and the Jews had "no

dealings with the Samaritans"; but this Samaritan woman was a great sinner, terribly in need of salvation, so Jesus cast good form to the wind. Formality might never stand between him and a lost soul. Walter Rauschenbusch used to say, "You can't soil your hands doing the Lord's work."

II. A Congregation of One

That well with its precious water was a good introduction to Jesus' little sermon to his congregation of one. He never needed to look far for texts! We marvel at his skill in illustrating truths and teaching. Mount Gerizim was there with its schismatic temple and worship, but if he had started off with a discussion about the distinctions and differences between Judaism and Samaritanism, the chances are that the woman wouldn't have remained to listen.

Water was a splendid catch-word, entering-wedge. It is but a step in the pathway of the mind from drinking water to the Water of Life. The woman, as an Oriental, knew that Jesus was speaking figuratively when he talked about the "living water" that he had to give. Her query (vss. 11, 12) was intended to draw Jesus out, to learn what he had in mind.

Jesus shows us here how inclusive his salvation was to be: Even these hated Samaritans I take in! This has always been one of the gospel's outstanding characteristics, that it does not exclude outcast classes, that it knows no narrow nationalism. No wonder that it came into violent conflict with Judaism. It is a popular gospel, but the gospel of no people.

III. A Searching Conversation

It stands to reason that Christ must meet people on an honest footing. Before he can give this woman the water of life, and explain to her the higher things of his gospel, there must be a frank acknowledgment on her part of her sinfulness; she must know that he knows all about it. Sinfulness, covered, acts as a barrier to truth. This is why confession and repentance are the first steps Godward.

"*The husband who was no husband* (the man whose mistress she was) was the plague-spot where her healing must begin" (Plummer). There was falsehood in her literal truth. She discovered, as many another has, that you cannot dissemble with Christ. From the outset, however, the woman appears dissatisfied with her manner of life, eager for the spiritual cleansing and refreshment that Jesus suggests.

IV. True Worship

Jerusalem was nearer God than Gerizim. The purity of monotheism and of the Mosaic system had been corrupted in the north far more than in Judea. But there was no use quibbling about the comparative merits of the two worship centers, for the time had come when God was to be adored not exclusively here or there, but anywhere. Worship must be delocalized, for in a little while Gerizim would be crowned only with ruins and the temple hill at Jerusalem with débris of awful warfare.

Jesus here utters one of the most important of all religious truths, one of the basic truths of his teaching. He delivers religion forever from the irksomeness and complexity of elaborate ritual and form. He teaches that the little child, and the simple-minded man, and the empty-handed may draw near to God. He invites men to assemble on the lake-shore and hillside, in Roman catacombs, in American chapel-cars, in the plainest wooden meeting-house, for adoration and communion with the heavenly Father. For God is a Spirit, everywhere present; therefore anywhere to be worshiped; and therefore the outward adjuncts of worship are of secondary importance.

Verse 26. This open declaration of his Messiahship is surprising in the light of such passages as Matthew 16:20; 17:9, and Mark 8:30. But there was no fear of the Samaritans making political capital out of him. Moreover, "it was one thing for Christ to avow himself when he saw that hearts were ready for the announcement, quite another for disciples and others to make him known promiscuously" (Plummer).

"I think that God wants each of his children to be a sort of artesian well."—(Dwight L. Moody).

Practical Questions for Class Discussion

¶ We find in our world today much of the same nationalistic and religious antipathy that existed between Jews and Samaritans. Give instances of this. Why cannot the world rid itself of it? Why has Christendom (we will not say Christianity) failed to eradicate it? Why is it inimical to the spirit and teachings of Jesus?

¶ Which is easier, spiritual communion with God or the worship by forms? Does this, perhaps, depend on the person?

¶ Do you think that the Quakers (Friends) have gone to an extreme in the matter of discarding religious forms? Could you yourself be a good religionist as a Quaker?

¶ When does the worship by forms, or at holy places, become worship in spirit and truth?

¶ What does Jesus' conversation with the woman suggest as to how we are to deal with people whom we are trying to lead to Christ?

¶ A great deal is now being said of "personal evangelism"; what do you understand by it?

Notes and Comments

The call of opportunity—"now is the day of salvation"—is not alone to the unsaved, but also to Christ's followers who are to do his saving work. Opportunity means action. Jesus might have come to that well an hundred times without ever again meeting the woman there. When the harvest is ripe the reaping may not be delayed. Emerson says, "The real opportunity never repeats itself."

The Mulier Samaritana, "Samaritan Woman," is one of the three penitent women who in Goethe's *Faust* intercede for the soul of Marguerite. Her lines, in Taylor's translation:

By that well, the ancient station
Whither Abram's flocks were driven;
By the jar, whose restoration
To the Saviour's lips were given;

By the fountain, pure and vernal,
Thence its present bounty spending—
Overflowing, bright, eternal,
Watering the world's unending!

Jacob's Well, at the entrance to the valley between Mounts Ebal and Gerizim, is one of the few sites of the Bible in regard to which there has never been any doubt. "It is now seventy-nine feet deep, cut in the limestone rock, nine feet wide, though very narrow at the opening. It was probably deeper still in Jesus' day, as there is rubble at the bottom" (Basil Mathews in *A Life of Jesus*). The references to the "parcel of ground" (vs. 5) are, Genesis 33:19; 48:22; Joshua 24:32. It has been suggested that one of the disciples had with him the rope and jar the little band used in drawing water.

TEACHERS' HELPS

In the Men's Class

Charles C. Stillman, Columbus, Ohio

Jesus the Water of Life

Let not our familiarity with this story dull us to the spectacular nature of this conversation between a weary traveler and a woman with a past. "Please give me a drink," started it all. The climax comes in the highly important statement, "I who am talking to you am he."

Important in two respects: the first, for the unmistakable claim of the traveler, that the coming Messiah who is called the Christ is by the roadside seeking a drink of water; the second for the revelation as made to a casual acquaintance and in a casual manner.

This woman apparently was unconventional in behavior—but let no one think she was dumb. Quite the contrary, she was mentally alert. The disciples, coming back with the food they had gone to purchase, interrupted the conversation. The prosaic nature of the subsequent

recital should not cause us to miss the excitement of the woman. She forgot about her errand—to get water at the well—left the pitcher on the stone curb, and hurried back to town to raise the question about the Christ.

Wisdom always lurks in unexpected places. Education is too often confused with school attendance and records. I am writing on September 22, 1936. Straw-votes are the order of the day. Regardless of intelligence of the voters, one man's vote counts the same as any other man's vote. Democracy presupposes salutary results by majority declaration. Wisdom is not a matter of numbers, majorities, minorities.

In my experience and observation I have found prejudice and unwarranted bias in high places as well as in those places considered by some as "low." It is of absorbing interest to me that Jesus is recorded as having clearly, unmistakably, unconventionally made the significant declaration of his Messiahship to —above all!—a Samaritan woman. "I cannot understand," said she, in substance, "why a Jew like you should be asking for a drink of water from a Samaritan woman like me." She knew and Jesus knew that the Jews and Samaritans did not have any dealings with one another. It just was not done in the best circles. Although she had essayed matrimony six times, she skilfully appraised the unusual words of this courteous traveler, who treated her with respect and recognized her ability to make accurate inferences from obvious facts.

Today I talked with a member of my teaching staff who recently returned from a Southern university where he taught a summer course in organized recreation. A high school coach wanted to know why Jesse Owens (star track man from Ohio State University) and other Negroes were performing so well in athletics. My associate replied: "It is due to yourselves. Mostly, these Negro boys star in track. You bar them from football, baseball, and basket-ball, and all games where intimate association is required. Running is less removed from the primordial habits than are some of the group games. In track athletics a Negro boy can get out alone. He can run, or practise the broad or high jump. It is an individualistic performance. With less opportunity in the social contests, he has set out to do his best in the activity where social inhibitions are of relatively little account."

Whether or not the increasingly successful performances of Negro athletes is tending to break down social barriers I cannot say. I do say that he who judges ability, skill, wisdom, courtesy, worth by the artificial standards of economic, racial, or religious factors loses one of the great lessons easily derivable from the conversation of Jesus the traveler with the Samaritan woman, when our Lord declared his Messiahship, beautifully sermonized about the eternal life water, exemplified tolerance, magnified personality, and universalized religion. Is tolerance a virtue? It is.

Before My Class of Women

Cora F. Sherwood, Salem, Massachusetts

Jesus Meets Our Deepest Need

The deepest need of the human body is for water. We can go much longer without food than without water. This story is used as the vehicle for the truth that the deepest needs of us all can be met by Jesus. They can be met only by him. Until they are met by him all the questioning and quibbling about other things are futile. Perhaps it will help us to consider some of the human needs that were first satisfied in this woman by her contact with Jesus.

1. *Fear of her fellow men (or women).* Noontime was not the usual time to fetch water. The women habitually came to the well in the cool of the morning or at the end of the day. Why did this woman not follow the custom? May she not have been afraid of the pointing of the finger of scorn and the whispered gossip? She evidently had good reason to shun other women.

But we find this fact in the lives of people today. Whatever the reason, they are controlled by fear, dominated by it. Fear is driving many people to desperation. With all our inventions and improvements to make modern life more comfortable, we are reverting to the attitude of the savage in much of our inner life. Our minds are about as full of things we are afraid of as are the minds of the Africans.

True, we do not express those fears as those more childlike people do, but we have them just the same. Mrs. Kellersberger, in her mission-study book *Congo Crosses,* calls this ignorant and superstitious attitude one of the crosses that is passing away in Africa. The reason she gives is not that Western life is being brought to this strange and wonderful country, but that "Christ, through evangelical missions, is revealing to them the way, the truth, and the light."

Fear will pass from any person's life when that life is Christ-controlled.

2. *Feeling of being some use in the world.* We all want to amount to something, to say or do something that will attract the attention of other people. When this woman saw that people believed what she said, and flocked out to see this wonderful new Teacher, it gave her a new sense of "belonging." At last she was of some use in the world. People believed what she said. They trusted her to some extent. She was beginning to have a better opinion of herself. She was acquiring self-respect.

When we get this feeling of fellowship it makes life seem more important. At a time when most men put on slippers Abraham put on shoes. Life for him began at eighty, when he came to regard his own life and that of his family as having significance for the world.

3. *Feeling of sympathy.* I have found someone who understands me. To be understood is one of the deep cravings of persons, especially the young who are trying to adjust themselves to a difficult world. It seems hard and cold, and they take refuge in the feeling that parents and teachers do not understand. Much of this feeling is carried over into adult life, and we get to feel out of harmony with people.

This woman was so happy to tell people she had found a friend who, knowing her past, was still willing to talk with her, and tell her things, and trust her.

In closing his book *Consider Africa,* Basil Mathews relates an interesting story of a clearing made in a dense forest. The old trees were felled, and that allowed the sunshine to fall on soil that had lain in shadow for many years. Soon fresh green shoots appeared, and in due time lovely flowers bloomed. Men who had lived for many years in that forest had never seen flowers of this kind. Seeds carried long before, perhaps by passing birds, had lain in the soil, but they had never germinated, for the sunshine had never reached them. In every life there are seeds of a lovelier sort than usually grow there, because the sunshine of Christ had not reached the soil of the soul.

4. *No second-hand religion.* It is to the everlasting glory of those Samaritan villagers that they did not depend on anyone's hearsay for their conviction. They went and heard for themselves. Where there was one woman who believed, now after two days there were many.

A little over fifty years ago Livingstone stood alone at Uganda, one Christian in the land. Now there is a church at Uganda carrying on an active work with its own people, and also an aggressive home mission program. In that section are over one thousand schools, staffed with four thousand African teachers, as well as two thousand congregations with native ministers. They are receiving twelve thousand members a year for baptism. What a result of the leadership of one man, who dared to believe that Africa and the African people would listen to the message of Christ! A vague sense of a distant God is not enough for anyone, African, or American, or European, or Asiatic. All need a personal God who will care and help, and meet our deepest needs. There is only one who can do that, Jesus Christ. In him there is neither man or woman—he is the solution of sex problems. In him there is neither bond or free—he is the solution of industrial relations. In him there is neither Jew nor Gentile—he settles the race question.

Lesson IV. January 24. THE SIGNIFICANCE OF CHRIST'S MIRACLES

John 5: 1 to 6: 71. (Verses printed, John 5: 2-9; 6: 8-15)

General Theme: TWO MIRACLES OF MERCY

Prepared by Mitchell Bronk, D. D.

Devotional Reading for the Opening Service: Colossians 1: 9-18

KEY VERSE: The works which the Father hath given me to finish, the same works that I do, bear witness of me, that the Father hath sent me.—John 5: 36

5: 2 Now there is at Jerusalem by the sheep market a pool, which is called in the Hebrew tongue Bethesda, having five porches.

3 In these lay a great multitude of impotent folk, of blind, halt, withered, waiting for the moving of the water.

4 For an angel went down at a certain season into the pool, and troubled the water: whosoever then first after the troubling of the water stepped in was made whole of whatsoever disease he had.

5 And a certain man was there, which had an infirmity thirty and eight years.

6 When Jesus saw him lie, and knew that he had been now a long time in that case, he saith unto him, Wilt thou be made whole?

7 The impotent man answered him, Sir, I have no man, when the water is troubled, to put me into the pool: but while I am coming, another steppeth down before me.

8 Jesus saith unto him, Rise, take up thy bed, and walk.

9 And immediately the man was made whole, and took up his bed, and walked: and on the same day was the sabbath.

6: 8 One of his disciples, Andrew, Simon Peter's brother, saith unto him,

9 There is a lad here, which hath five barley loaves, and two small fishes: but what are they among so many?

10 And Jesus said, Make the men sit down. Now there was much grass in the place. So the men sat down, in number about five thousand.

11 And Jesus took the loaves; and when he had given thanks, he distributed to the disciples, and the disciples to them that were set down; and likewise of the fishes as much as they would.

12 When they were filled, he said unto his disciples, Gather up the fragments that remain, that nothing be lost.

13 Therefore they gathered them together, and filled twelve baskets with the fragments of the five barley loaves, which remained over and above unto them that had eaten.

14 Then those men, when they had seen the miracle that Jesus did, said, This is of a truth that prophet that should come into the world.

15 When Jesus therefore perceived that they would come and take him by force, to make him a king, he departed again into a mountain himself alone.

A Bible Message for Every Day

Monday. Christ Heals the Sick. John 5: 2-9. "Thy touch has still its ancient power." "The healing of his seamless dress is by our beds of pain."

Tuesday. Christ Feeds the Hungry. John 6: 8-15. That it was a great multitude that he fed may be illustrative of the countless numbers ever in need of the Bread of Life. Let us not be daunted by the hugeness of that need—Christ wasn't.

Wednesday. One with the Father. John 5: 19, 20. May we not assume that oneness with Christ will, similarly, give us the power to do things that Christ does—his power?

Thursday. The Compassion of Jesus. Matt. 9: 32-38. Shepherdless sheep—the needy, the afflicted everywhere—and that he would be their Shepherd and they would not, was it this that so sorely grieved him?

Friday. Heavenly Manna. John 6: 22-33. By partaking of this heavenly, we get heaven into us. Paul had partaken of the Bread of Life, and did he not say, "Christ liveth in me"?

Saturday. The Spirit of Helpfulness. Matt. 25: 31-40. Those who most need our help are often disagreeable, unappreciative, or even repulsive—but not when we see them back-grounded by Christ.

Sunday. God's Goodness. Ps. 146: 5-10. The Christian may lack many things, but nothing that the Father in heaven knows is good for him.

At the Threshold of the Lesson

John's Gospel does not aim to give a complete or connected sketch of our Lord's earthly life and ministry. Written much later than the Synoptics, it is selective and supplementary. It presents a series of representative incidents and discourses, evidently chosen with the two-fold purpose of the writing in view: to show that Jesus is the Messiah, and to bring men—through faith in him—into the blessed and enduring life with God (John 20: 31). The second of the two miracles we are studying was already in Matthew, Mark and Luke, but John felt that it belonged in his Gospel also, because it is a fine text for one of his favorite themes, Christ the Sustenance of Life. Chapter 4 showed Christ as the Source of Life.

The Lesson Before Us

1. THE HEALING AT THE POOL
John 5: 2-9

I. Bethesda

The Pool of Bethesda has usually been identified with the ancient spring Gihon ("the gusher"; 1 Kings 1: 33; 2 Chron. 32: 30). It is now known as the Virgin's Fount, an intermittent spring, whose "troubled" waters are still visited by the Jews for purposes of cure. It was southeast of the Temple area. The traditional Sheep Gate was farther to the north; but the language here does not necessarily locate the spring near that particular gate. (Moffatt has "sheep-pool.")

Bethesda means "House of Mercy." It is a beautiful word and on this account, as well as because of its associations, it has been used thousands of times as a name for hospitals and curative springs.

Verse 4 is omitted in the Revised and all modern versions because not found in a majority of the oldest and best manuscripts. When read it should be understood as expressing merely the popular belief in regard to the spring's healing virtue and the way in which this was effected.

Porches. The colonnade that had been built around the spring for the protection of the unfortunates waiting for the gushing of the spring was in five divisions.

II. The "Certain Man"

Whole (vs. 6) is our "sound," "healthy." From this Greek word we have our "hygiene." Our words whole, holy, heal, hale and health are all related, being derived from the one Anglo-Saxon word *hal.* When Christ implies spiritual healing, also, this must be determined from the context. The man was perhaps paralyzed, or bent and rigid from acute rheumatism.

Wilt thou is ever the preliminary, conditioning word of Jesus' healing and helpfulness. It honors the recipient and gives His ministries distinction. Mrs. Montgomery has, "Do you want to get well?"

Bed—because this was in the Orient—would mean pallet, or mat. That he may himself have painfully dragged it to the spring would be another evidence of his unfortunate state. With what ease and joy he now carried it away!

III. The Man's Response

Or, you cannot receive Christ's blessings, his ministries, unless you reach out with certain attitudes. In this case there were four:

1. *Helplessness.* The many years must have deepened the sense of it. He lay there, unable either to stand or walk. Perhaps he was bitter about it. We do not know. But if he had ever had any egotism or self-confidence, the weary waiting and the countless disappointments had taken it all out of him. And his friendlessness. Such a life, however, offers Christ a good "approach." "Nothing in my hand I bring—naked,

come to thee for dress; helpless, look to thee for grace."

2. *Patience.* "Thirty-eight years!" A lifetime. It is dreadful to think about it. When one of your acquaintances is that way, for years, you question, Why does not God mercifully take him home? Our unfortunate never lost hope; and patience. Maybe he kept thinking, Some day a generous-hearted person will come along and help me down into the pool, just when the spring is gushing. Jesus said another time, "He that endureth to the end shall be saved."

3. *Faith.* We need not criticise his belief in the potency of Bethesda's water, at the moment of the gushing, to heal the first one in. Any kind of belief in the wonderful gets one somewhere. To be skeptical of the wonderful is to live with clipped wings. Possibly the man knew something of Jesus' miracle-working, but more likely he didn't. That he was a man of faith is evidenced by his ready compliance with Jesus' command, Try if you can't! Faith is a big word in religion, most of all in Christianity.

4. *Willingness.* Christ is always saying, Wilt thou? Do you want it—this redeemed life of my Kingdom? Do you want to—follow me? Our consent is ever his condition. "The freedom of the will" is more than a theological doctrine, it is a simple basic principle of our gospel. The Saviour Visitor not only never forces the human-heart door, but he never enters unless the door is open.

IV. The Meaning of the Miracle

The illustrative meaning of the miracle would be: Men everywhere needing and longing for the healing of the Water of Life—which is Christ Jesus; who need to be told that they can if they will. Or for us so to present Christ to the world that wherever the helpless congregate they shall feel him standing there, ready to save.

The "thou art made whole," of verse 14, seems to imply that before Christ and the man were through with each other spiritual salvation had been added to the bodily. Was it not the usual course with His miracles of healing?

2. THE BREAD. John 6:8-15

I. Occasion and Place

Jesus would put himself out of Herod Antipas' way, for the time being (Luke 9:10). So they went out of Galilee, across the lake to the little fishing-village of Bethsaida ("house of the fishers"), and then up into the hills—"mountains"—back of the village. It would be in the tetrarchy of Herod Philip (Luke 3:1), a pretty decent ruler, for a Herod!

John groups the incidents of his Gospel around the Jewish festivals. The lesson of the Passover is akin to the lesson of this miracle. It would be then the spring of (according to the usual reckoning) the year 29. By the interjection of "a feast of the Jews" (vs. 4) and "which is the Sea of Tiberias" (vs. 1) we are reminded that this Gospel was written outside Palestine. Mark tells us that they crossed the lake for rest (6:45); and Jesus would have in mind undistracted opportunity to teach the Twelve. But he could not get away from the crowds of the needy and of the curious.

II. A Victualer Problem

We are not to forget the reference, in Mark (6:34), *to Jesus' great pity for this multitude because he saw them as shepherdless sheep,* fleeced by the Roman Empire's officials, misled by official Judaism. This their need was greater than that which he satisfied with the loaves and fishes. And this need he satisfied with his life-giving words, and healing.

Eagerly they listened, "until the day was now far spent" (Mark 6:35). The disciples began to be anxious. They knew that many of the people had come from a distance, perhaps starting before breakfast.

Philip and Andrew were from Bethsaida, and Jesus naturally turns to them with his inquiry as to where in the neighborhood could food be procured. Philip didn't stand the "proving" of the Master very well. Why couldn't he have answered confidently: With your strange power almost any supply of bread will be sufficient? Instead, he thinks of the impossibility of feeding all that great company—even if Judas' money-bag contained, as it didn't, as much as thirty-five or forty dollars.

The denarius, the Greek word rendered "pennyworth" (R. V. "shilling"; the "Baptist Bible" retains the original word, "denarius") *was a Roman silver coin worth about seventeen cents of our money.* Its purchasing power may be estimated from the fact that it was the ordinary price of a day's labor.

Andrew makes a better showing than Philip; he has something to suggest—but doubts if it can be done. They are both common types of modern Christians in the face of Christ's plans and needs!

III. Much in Little

Grace before meals is taught here by our Lord's example. In all the accounts of the Last Supper, also, we are told that Jesus gave thanks. The parallel accounts (Matt. 14, Mark 6, Luke 9) tell that the multitude was seated in ranks, orderly. It was Nisan, the month of flowers. The lakeshore was carpeted with the soft green grass of springtime.

Jesus takes the barley loaves and fishes and breaks them, and as they leave his hands they are hundredfolded. So royally he served the meal that not only were all satisfied, but the fragments even that were left filled twelve baskets. Basil Mathews thinks that these baskets were the wicker traveling food-hampers that the Twelve all carried. "That nothing be lost" (vs. 12)—how many incidental lessons in the right way of doing things we are taught here!

Multum in parvo, much in little, is one of God's great truths; much from little, that is the way God works. For Christ is God. He takes the trifle and as it passes from his hands it is no longer such, but much and great, no longer five and two, but enough to "go round," no matter how multitudinous the company. It is the same lesson that we learn from Elijah's miracle with the oil and meal of the widow of Sarepta (1 Kings 17), or that Jesus expressed in the parables of the Leaven and the Grain of Mustard-seed.

IV. The Truth for Us

What a precious truth it is, and how much it may mean to us! Our lives seem so insignificant on the background of the universe, all that we are and do so unimportant in God's great scheme of things! But let us be taught that if we put our lives into Christ's hands he will manifold them, will bring out of their service fruitful and abiding results. Oh it is wonderful, what the transforming power of Christ can accomplish! I may be but a cipher, but if I place Christ before that cipher I become hundreds, thousands.

Practical Questions for Class Discussion

¶ Have you been influenced in coming to Christ or in your Christian life by his miracles, as recounted in the Gospels?

¶ Do you regard the temporal, material, benefits to be derived from following Christ as legitimate inducements in persuading people to accept him

¶ Social reformers and preachers sometimes speak of the helplessness and desperation of our day. Why can it not save itself? Point out some of the efforts that are being made—and their failure.

¶ It is sometimes maintained that it is wrong to refer to Christ as the Great Physician in a medical, bodily healing sense. What would be your view in the light of such a miracle as that at Bethesda?

¶ Were all Christ's miracles "Teaching miracles"?

¶ Cite instances where God has done big things with little lives, other than those we have mentioned.

¶ What suggestions can you make for improving "grace before meals," as ordinarily practised, or for introducing it where not practised? What spiritual lesson can you get from the "gathering up of the fragments?"

Notes and Comments

"It was Jesus' presence—the look of him, the tone of his voice, the power that came from him which enabled him to conquer. And that is what has helped men in all ages to do the impossible thing—to carry the gospel to the cannibals, to suffer in prisons, to die amid the blazing

fagots—the inspiration and strength of Jesus. What Paul said is true, 'I can do all things through Christ who strengtheneth me.'"—*C. E. Stone.*

Yet though the Power to raise the dead
Treads earth no more, we still may try
To smooth the couch where sick men lie,
Whispering—to hopeless heart and head—
"Arise and walk!"
—*Austin Dobson.*

"*He would not be a bread king.* He would be the bread of life, the life eternal. All his wonder-works were signs hung out amid things seen to be advertisements of spiritual things unseen. They were index fingers pointing to the life beyond the temporal horizon. . . The bread which they had eaten in such abundance was a sign of the bread which nourishes the life eternal, that bread which satisfies the deepest appetite in the human soul—the heart-hunger for God." —*Cornelius Woelfkin.*

Many of those who chased Jesus over to Bethsaida will have been moved by curiosity in his teaching, or to witness his wonder-deeds, or to be healed; and many doubtless chased him back to Capernaum thinking there might be more "eats." We believe, however, that there were a goodly number among those thousands for whom the miracle and its lesson were the beginning of real faith in the Master and attachment to his kingdom. Then as now men were moved by mixed motives. The enticement of the loaves and fishes is sometimes accompanied by a hunger and thirst for righteousness.

"As surely as the body cries for food, the spirit cries for the Supreme Good."

TEACHERS' HELPS

In the Men's Class

Charles C. Stillman, Columbus, Ohio

Two Miracles of Mercy

It might at first have appeared an insult; or a jeer. I refer to the question of Jesus' put to a cripple who had been in that condition for thirty-eight years, "Do you want to get well?" Of course he wanted to. But assuredly the cripple recognized sincerity, sympathy and helpfulness in the question. In the previous week's lesson the woman at the Sychar well recognized the courtesy, dignity and integrity of the traveler who asked her for a drink of water on a hot day. You know what happened to this lame man; he did get well. He met the conditions, having faith in Jesus.

Do you want to get well? A charming young woman, a friend of our family's, was withdrawn from a normal college. "T B," said the doctor. Another physician—in good standing—had said she was all right, just had a little cold, which soon would pass off. Of course she wanted to get well; and of course her father, mother, sister and brother all wanted her to get well. I saw her three weeks ago—healthy, cheerful, working. In the meantime there have been two solid years in a sanatorium and two years of ordered activity outside the "san." It makes a big difference who is prescribing, and how the prescription is carried out.

I know a superintendent of schools who suffered years ago from ulcers of the stomach. Diet, rest, care—now all right. He was willing to pay the price. I saw him three weeks ago—happy, cheerful, working.

How about our country? Do we as a nation want to get well? Well, what is the price? Democratic ticket? Republican ticket? Socialist ticket? Union for Social Justice? Dr. Townsend? Mr. Lemke? A man must write his own answer to these political questions. I write mine, but I sometimes wonder what good it does.

What do you think of this? A very ardent member of the Christian Reformed Church, and he is also a prominent and successful business man, said to me recently: "Charlie, the answer to all these problems is at hand, but we do not take advantage of it. If you and I and the rest of us would live the program Jesus laid down for us most of our difficulties would be greatly assuaged."

This country needs two things—at least, maybe many—a revival of that kind of Christian faith which spells love to neighbor in all social and economic relations; a spread of the idea that obligations to the state are just as demanding as obligations to one's neighbor. These two virtues should grow together. The price is heavy. Do we want to get well?

"Make the people sit down," said Jesus, preparatory to feeding them. Get in a receptive attitude! Relax! The thousands were fed. If I am correct in my interpretation of what follows, Jesus was disappointed in that the people wanted to make him king. Bread is highly essential. Calm nerves and full stomachs go together nicely. Note, however, that Jesus did not wish to become king on the strength of meeting the immediate, material cravings of the physical.

I shudder at times when I listen to deductions made from the miracle of the feeding. It must not be forgotten that the feeding was incidental. The people had seen other miracles, "signs." Jesus had been preaching and talking for months. Obviously he was pained by this enthusiasm for him because he had fed them. He wanted a firmer base for faith.

Meeting the material needs of people is a good place for a start, but no place to finish. That kind of charity that provides bread and butter, and naught else is bad. That kind of national policy that neglects education and culture, to provide stomach needs alone, is bound to fail. Resting and eating need the supplement of thinking and working.

Before My Class of Women

Cora F. Sherwood, Salem, Massachusetts

The Significance of Christ's Miracles

One Sunday a teacher told the story of the feeding of the five thousand to her kindergarten class. The following Sunday she asked five-year-old Jimmie to retell the story for her. Jimmie did so, with childish variations. After he had finished the teacher asked, "Do you believe Jesus could do that?" Jimmie replied, "Why, of course, wasn't he God?" This simple story gives us out of the mouth of a child the real answer to most of our difficulties about the miracles.

Jesus was interested in people and wanted to help them, so it was a joy for him to be able to cure some of the illnesses so common in Palestine. He also wanted to make people understand that he had all of the power of God at his command, to use not for himself, but for others.

1. *Medical miracles.* God is working through our consecrated medical missionaries to help those who are suffering.

In one of the outstations of Santa Ana, El Salvador, the little son of a native pastor was seriously burned. The father had no money. Neither doctor nor medicine were available. Throughout the night, as the father sat by the boy's bedside, he prayed; then he wrote a letter to the missionaries. Miss Juanita Woodburn, our missionary nurse at Santa Ana, received the letter. She obtained a car and brought the little fellow to her hospital. For four weeks every day she dressed the terrible wounds. When finally the burned flesh was cut away the new skin grew miraculously fast, and the little boy seemed likely to have as straight a body as ever. Miss Woodburn's comment is the main point of this story: "We all felt that the boy's perfect and rapid recovery was God's power working through us and the medicine."

In fact, we see that always our missionaries put the emphasis exactly where Jesus put it. Remember that Jesus hunted up the man he had cured at the pool of Bethesda and urged him to give up his sinful life, lest something worse than being a cripple come to him. To Jesus soul-cure was much more important than body-cure. Dr. Emory Ross says: "Into most African communities the missionary doctor or nurse or lay missionary first brought the curative ointment, the healing scalpel, the revealing microscope, the specific drug of modern medicine. . . Fifty missionary

doctors in the one colony of the Belgian Congo have brought surgical relief to tens of thousands and medical cures to millions. . . But the spiritual release has been great too. . . modern medicine is one of the great factors in breaking fetishism and releasing from its bondage the soul of the African."[1]

2. *Feeding a hungry world.* When Jesus lived in Palestine there were many hungry people. It makes one shudder to think how many millions, yes billions, of people there are or have been who have never known what it means to not be hungry. Much has been done to make possible a better food supply. Even in our own United States there have been forty-six bureaus of reclamation, whose main object has been to supply water to make possible the growing of food in former dry sections. The most recent projects of Boulder Dam and the Grand Coulée are examples of attempts to provide the Western and Southwestern sections with water for irrigation. But in spite of everything that has been done and all the progress of scientific methods of agriculture, there are still, apparently, about as many hungry folks as before. Are we still estimating the cost, and feeling sure we cannot raise the money to pay, or are we trying to do something?

Jesus used the cooperative method. The boy, the people, the disciples all shared in the effort. In Christ's hand and under his direction there was more than enough. The cooperative method now being tried in many parts of the world may be the way out.

3. *But people are hungry for other things than bread.* What are we Christians saying to them? "Send them away?" Or Jesus', "Give ye them"? People are spiritually hungry. They are now realizing their need of something more than the things money can buy. Many are mentally and socially hungry. Lots of people are lonely, especially in the cities. They want friendliness. These things cost thought, and time, and a spirit of caring and sharing. Are we counting too closely the cost of these things?

"Share with him thy bread of blessing,
Sorrow's burden share;
When thy heart enfolds a brother
God is there."

[1] *The Christian Mission in Africa.*

The Lesson Lived

Susanna G. Fisher

"Christ Is the Head of the Medical Profession"

My Father worketh hitherto, and I work (John 5:17).

"Christ himself set the example by ministering to the sick."

"Medical work has been the greatest single agency in breaking down prejudice and winning a friendly hearing for the gospel, and thousands of bodies have been relieved and souls saved in our hospitals."

"Colleges and normal, medical, and theological schools take the more promising graduates of the boarding schools and train them for special work among their own people."

"All mission schools are uncompromisingly Christian. The Bible is the chief text-book. Jesus is the great Teacher."

In the Likeness of Jesus

Wilt thou be made whole? (John 5:6.)

When in the mountains of Persia, in a part where no European had visited before, the few medicines I carried made a way for me everywhere into the hearts of the people.

"What do you do this for?" the people would ask me, and I would reply, "I do it for love of Jesus, my Master and Lord."

"You call Jesus your Master and Lord," they would say, "and we think the same about Mahomet. But we have no hakim in the likeness of Jesus."

A hakim in the likeness of Jesus! Was there ever before so beautiful a definition of the medical missionary?—*Isabella Bird Bishop.*

Lesson V. January 31. ALCOHOLIC BEVERAGES—A FINANCIAL ASSET OR LIABILITY?

Proverbs 21:17; 23:20, 21; Matthew 24:45-51; John 6:26, 27, 35

General Theme: THE FINANCIAL COST OF ALCOHOLIC BEVERAGES
(The Economic Approach to the Liquor Problem)

Prepared by Mitchell Bronk, D.D.

Devotional Reading for the Opening Service: Proverbs 23:29-32

KEY VERSE: Wherefore do ye spend money for that which is not bread, and your labor for that which satisfieth not?—Isa. 55:2

Proverbs 21:17; 23:20, 21

21:17 He that loveth pleasure shall be a poor man: he that loveth wine and oil shall not be rich.

23:20 Be not among winebibbers; among riotous eaters of flesh:

21 For the drunkard and the glutton shall come to poverty: and drowsiness shall clothe a man with rags.

Matthew 24:45-51

45 Who then is a faithful and wise servant, whom his lord hath made ruler over his household, to give them meat in due season?

46 Blessed is that servant, whom his lord when he cometh shall find so doing.

47 Verily I say unto you, That he shall make him ruler over all his goods.

48 But and if that evil servant shall say in his heart, My lord delayeth his coming;

49 And shall begin to smite his fellowservants, and to eat and drink with the drunken;

50 The lord of that servant shall come in a day when he looketh not for him, and in an hour that he is not aware of,

51 And shall cut him asunder, and appoint him his portion with the hypocrites: there shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth.

John 6:26, 27, 35

26 Jesus answered them and said, Verily, verily, I say unto you, Ye seek me, not because ye saw the miracles, but because ye did eat of the loaves, and were filled.

27 Labour not for the meat which perisheth, but for that meat which endureth unto everlasting life, which the Son of man shall give unto you: for him hath God the Father sealed.

35 And Jesus said unto them, I am the bread of life: he that cometh to me shall never hunger; and he that believeth on me shall never thirst.

A Bible Message for Every Day

Monday. The Unprofitable Servant. Matt. 24:45-51. To smash the confidence that someone has placed in you is well-nigh an unpardonable sin. All the more grievous when that someone is Almighty God.

Tuesday. The Price of Intoxication. Hab. 2:12-17. Our moral "controls,"—which means for us Christians the indwelling power of Christ—is all that stands between us and bestiality. Strong drink loosens, then cuts away those controls.

Wednesday. Belshazzar Sells His Kingdom. Dan. 5:17-28. "And drank wine" is the beginning of a vast number of the true stories of crazy conduct by which men bring upon themselves disaster.

Thursday. Defeat Through Drunkenness. 1 Kings 20:1, 16-21. To manage anything, whether it be a kingdom, or a small business—or an automobile—demands the clarity of mind and the self-

control that only total abstinence procures.

Friday. Alcohol and Race Degeneracy. Isa. 5:22-24. Drinkers are always boasting of their ability to do it (vs. 22). Just the same the drink habit inevitably rots out (vs. 24) the life of the individual and the nation.

Saturday. Woe Upon Excesses. Isa. 5:11-17. The self-control of self alone is a weak and unreliable rein, upon the appetite for strong drink or any other appetite; the self-control with Christ is the only real enabling power (cf. Phil. 4:13).

Sunday. The Law of Recompense. Gal. 6:1-10. The grip and wasting of alconol are the most evident of all the many illustrations of this inescapable, relentless truth and principle—stated in verse 8.

At the Threshold of the Lesson

"People are the supreme value. Their well-being may not be compromised or imperiled for the sake of any financial or economic advantage. The soul may not be sold."—*W. L. Poteat, in "Stop-Light."*

"We shall never come to social or industrial security until we come back to a new and Christian sense of human values. Personality is the greatest thing in the universe, it is the one indestructible thing, and is the one supreme object of divine love and redemption."—*W. A. Elliott.*

From a prayer by Walter Rauschenbusch: "O God, bring nigh the day when the unseemly mirth of drink shall seem a shame to all who see and hear; when the trade that debauches men shall be loathed like the trade that debauches women!"

[Four useful, up-to-date books to be recommended to those interested in the fight against alcohol are: *What About Alcohol,* by Bogen and Hisey ($1.50); *Alcohol: Its Effects on Man,* by Haven Emerson ($1.00); *Stop-Light,* by W. L. Poteat (75 cents), and *Temperance and the Changing Liquor Situation,* by Deets Pickett (65 cents). They may be ordered from the Society's Philadelphia headquarters, or any of the branch houses.]

The Lesson Before Us

I. The Scripture

The Proverbs are full of good old-fashioned Yankee common sense, with a touch of that spirit of providence ("looking out ahead") that is humorously associated with the Scotch. The Proverbs never dissociate effect and cause (e. g., "He who sows crime will reap calamity," 22:8); "He who keeps his mouth and his tongue keeps himself from trouble," 21:23 (Gordon).

The truths that many of these precepts express are so manifest and so commonplace that we are prone to forget their awful, relentless, unavoidable sequences. "If you say A, you have to say B" is an Italian adage. Those Hebrews of the Old Testament not infrequently sinned, but with their eyes open. They probably needed the warnings of the prophets, but they shouldn't have. They were too shrewd not to see that the next station beyond transgression is punishment.

Proverbs 21:17; 23:20, 21. "Loveth" here would have the sense of loving pleasure inordinately, absorbingly; indulging self to the disregard of other and important interests; and letting the love of wine push other interests aside. It is glaringly axiomatic that the person who does not take his "good times" in moderation needn't ever expect to amass riches—or to hold on to those already in his possession.

To keep money—especially nowadays—requires a head that alcohol hasn't befuddled ("drowsiness," 23:21). Again, the commonest "exhibit" of human life is the man who has brought poverty upon himself through the wine-cup (whisky-bottle).

Gluttony was more of a vice in antiquity than it is in modern times. We are astounded by the accounts given in classic literature of the enormous amount of food a warrior or grandee would consume at a single meal. Still, there is plenty of "riotous living" in our day, and many an impoverished man or woman bitterly regrets the fortune that was wasted, perhaps not in overeating and expensive viands, but at palatial hotels and expensive restaurants, in extravagant entertaining and the like, in fact, in trying to keep up with wealthier neighbors.

Matthew 24:45-51. In this parable of stewardship the evil servant is represented as a man in whom drink has done its work, rendering him careless of his responsibilities, slothful, stupid and cruel. We are accountable to God for all that we are and have. Drink at first dulls us to a sense of that accountability, and then utterly obliterates it.

John 6:26, 27, 35. Jesus has here a lesson in values. Men mix up values deplorably. How many people, young and old, do we see putting last things first, paying four times its value for a whistle—like Franklin's nephew—forgetful that that alone satisfies that "cometh down from heaven," even Christ Jesus.

II. The Economic Aspects of the Liquor Problem

As concerns the individual personally, little need be said. It would seem bordering on insult to remind the men and women of a church school that "wine is a mocker," and that it is economically harmful, not to say disastrous, to form the drink habit. The Scriptures we have just considered make this plain enough. Strong drink and the gospel of Christ have no dealings with each other!

Every evil habit that others practise harms us and those we love. We cannot get away from one another or break loose from the body politic. It is one of the things that Paul stresses with all his might: Romans 12; 1 Corinthians 12; Ephesians 4.

The economic waste of drink, even measured in dollars and cents, touches all of us; in the resulting poverty that our relief measures and taxes must succor, in the misdirection of trade and manufacture, and in inevitable destruction of property. Moreover, any habit or practice that breaks into health and morals as does drinking cannot but have serious economic revulsions. Various attempts have been made to measure the cost of drinking to the American people in dollars and cents. The totals are so enormous as to be frightening. Anyhow, one is warranted in fighting the liquor traffic for self-protection, from rightfully selfish motives. If you damage me I don't want to pay you for doing it!

In reckoning the drink bill, however, items far weightier than dollars and cents enter in. It is the cost to some of us in mental anguish and heart-break over the degradation and downfall of human personalities, created in the image of God, and perhaps near and dear to us. Or it is the cost to the kingdom of God in the hindrance and stoppage that drink is to its progress. Suchlike is the price we of several states are paying for the privilege of carrying on the trade in strong drink—or rather the price that the liquor traffic is paying us for the privilege of selling its nefarious wares.

We see dimly in the present what is small and what is great,
Slow of faith how weak an arm may turn the iron helm of fate,
But the soul is still oracular; amid the market's din,
List the ominous stern whisper from the Delphic cave within,—
"They enslave their children's children who make compromise with sin."

—*James Russell Lowell.*

Practical Questions for Class Discussion

¶ Consider—that sin is always costly. Every evil practice or bad habit has its price, which someone must pay (usually a number or a lot of people). Who is paying for the curse of strong drink, in your community, state, nation? How much of this cost is falling to you, directly and indirectly?

¶ Consider—that your town or city has only a limited amount of money (the sum total of the incomes of the inhabitants) at its disposal each year. Will not the size of the local liquor bill materially affect the trade in other commodities?

¶ It has always been a teaching of scientific economics that the manufacturing of goods that are harmful brings no ultimate monetary profit to a community or nation. Explain this, applied to the manufacture of liquors.

REPORTS—upon previous assignment:

¶ It has been claimed that a hotel cannot be run with profit without its bar and liquor trade. Is this so? Investigate.

¶ Interview grocers as to the effect of Repeal upon their trade, especially in necessities of life, like milk, meat and bread; and candy- and drug-stores as to how Repeal has affected their sale of soft drinks.

¶ Women have told me that they needed to watch their husbands on pay-day to see that they did not settle with the liquor-dealer first, then with the grocer—if at all. Investigate, if there are many such cases.

Notes and Comments

"A study of states' ledgers in account with the liquor traffic shows that in many states the drinkers are paying for their alcohol an amount about equal to the cost of relief. Unemployment has increased. Enforcement of repeal laws is costing more than was spent for the enforcement of prohibition, and boys and girls are admitted to saloons without question, and under the approving smile of government."—*E. H. Cherrington.*

"Revenues from liquor are less than the relief money squandered for liquor. In one month in Denver, eighty per cent. of those arrested for drinking and drunkenness were on relief. To the relief money add the public cost for *damage* and *crime* caused by alcohol. Repeal is impoverishing both labor and the farmer. Did you ever know anyone to drink himself rich?"—*F. Scott McBride.*

"Repeal caused the consumption of liquor to mount rapidly. Already, even under the Depression, the drink bill is estimated at three and one-quarter billion dollars. These billions of increased drink bill are diverted from legitimate channels of trade. When people spend their money for drink they do not have it to spend for something else."—*The Civic Bulletin.*

"Repeal has made liquor ubiquitous. It has made liquor not only accessible everywhere but obtrusive. Twice as many liquor-selling places have been opened as ever existed before. Grocery-stores have been made outlets and children have become inured to the presence of beer."—*D. Ligh Colvin.*

"Every year more than ten thousand people are sent to insane asylums or hospitals in this country because of the effects of alcohol upon their minds. Millions of dollars are spent by the taxpayers every year to take care of these people who have been made unable to take care of themselves because of the effects of alcohol."—*Bogen and Hisey, "What About Alcohol?"*

Now for some years the use of alcohol as a medicine has been discontinued at the great Massachusetts General Hospital in Boston. Dr. Charles Mayo, of the famous Mayo Clinic, says: "Medicine has reached the place where alcohol is rarely employed as a drug, being replaced by better remedies."

"The Journal of the National Education Association" gives "Twenty-six Million Reasons for Total Abstinence": the twenty-six million gasoline-automobiles and trucks in the United States!

The nation-wide advertising and high pressure sales program now being carried on by the liquor traffic through every channel of American publicity—press, radio, movies, bill-boards and direct mail solicitation—is at once a most startling and dangerously destructive economic influence in our social and business life. From the economic point of view alone, every dollar paid for such advertising is daily breeding potential disaster, not only to every business, but physically and otherwise to millions of American industry's legitimate customers.—*American Business Men's Research Foundation.*

TEACHERS' HELPS

In the Men's Class

Charles C. Stillman, Columbus, Ohio

THE FINANCIAL COST OF ALCOHOLIC BEVERAGES

Much research is required before one is entitled to comment—in his own name—on the effects of the use of alcoholic beverages. It is against the facts to claim that there is no difference of opinion among scientific men about the effects of alcohol upon the human system. There is difference of opinion, also, about the economic effects. The preponderance of scientific opinion, so far as my own observation and reading have gone, is decidedly against alcohol.

Prof. Thomas N. Carver, of Harvard University, during national-prohibition days, when the country was enjoying great prosperity, cited prohibition as a contributing factor to such prosperity.

Prof. Irving Fisher, of Yale University, in *Prohibition at Its Worst,* writes (this is a long quotation with thanks to Macmillan Company of New York, publishers of the interesting volume):

"Since scientific research has shown that alcoholic beverages slow down the human machine, and since the human machine is the most important machine in industry, we should expect the use of alcoholic beverages to slow down industry; and we should expect prohibition, if enforced, to speed up industry. The experiments already cited show, for instance, that the equivalent of two to four glasses of beer a day will impair the work done in typesetting by 8 per cent., increase the time required for heavy mountain marches 22 per cent., and impair accuracy of shooting under severe army tests 30 per cent., and that the capacity for mental work was lessened by from 25 to 40 per cent. by the equivalent of six to eight glasses of beer a day. . . Assuming the total alcohol used in the United States before prohibition to be consumed uniformly among its families, and assuming, as in the type-setting experiment (the minimum of the above figures), that each daily glass of beer reduces productivity 2 to 4 per cent., it follows that the productivity of labor would be increased from 10 to 20 per cent. by effective prohibition. But if, as is the fact, the consumption is unequally distributed, the impairment will, of course, be greater. That is, five glasses of beer consumed by one person will produce more impairment than one glass apiece when consumed by five persons. Therefore a 10 per cent. increase in productivity is a safe minimum."

Professor Fisher refers to a Connecticut manufacturer who thought that the elimination of drunkenness among his workmen would increase efficiency, that is, his factory output, by 20 per cent.

Professor Fisher makes a good case in demonstrating that prohibition saved six billion dollars a year to this country through transfer and increase of energy. In this estimate any savings in the cost of conducting jails, almshouses, and so forth, were not included.

Dr. Edward T. Devine, of New York City, in *Principles of Relief,* published also by the Macmillan Company, wrote in 1904: "It is a conservative estimate that one-fourth of all the cases of destitution with which private relief agencies have to deal are fairly attributable to intemperance." He adds: "Insanity, suicide, and death in other forms result from the use of alcohol, in many instances in which no question of relief arises. Cruelty, neglect and unhappiness result directly from the use of alcohol in families which are by no means near the verge of dependence."

The literature upon the economic and social effects of the use of alcoholic drinks is very extensive. There is much propaganda to defend their use and promote sales. There is much undependable literature produced by organizations with unsullied motives and with enthusiasm for the abolition of the use of liquor.

The case against alcohol can be so clearly and convincingly presented that our temperance organizations should be careful in their choice of material used in the name of education.

I conclude with one more quotation from the abundance of material at hand. *The Social Workers' Guide,* edited by Haldane (London): "Every inebriate is either a potential criminal, a burden upon public funds, a danger to himself and others, or a cause of distress, terror, scandal or nuisance to his family and to those with whom he associates."

Before My Class of Women

Cora F. Sherwood, Salem, Massachusetts

ALCOHOLIC BEVERAGES—A FINANCIAL ASSET OR LIABILITY

Money talks. This old saying comes home to us as we try to find out just how this business of traffic in liquor is affecting our pocketbooks. And let us not fool ourselves. It *is* affecting *our* pocketbooks, whether we ourselves actually spend money for drinks or not.

At the time of this writing the figures for 1936 are not available, but the teacher should try to get them for comparison, if possible, when the lesson is taught. According to *The Boston Transcript* the American people drank twenty-three billion glasses of beer alone. With these figures in mind it is not difficult to believe that in the wet years before prohibition two-thirds of all the money in circulation in this country passed through the hands of the liquor people.

Crime costs money. Judge Joseph Zottoli, of the Municipal Court in Boston, says that 70 per cent. of the criminals of this country come from broken homes and 40 per cent. of these homes are broken by alcohol. Disease costs money. Four leading medical authorities in Great Britain class alcoholism as one of the four greatest disease scourges of mankind—cancer, tuberculosis and venereal disease being the other three. It costs tremendously to care for the insane and feeble-minded in this country, and the numbers are increasing in alarming fashion. Alcoholism is one of the two chief causes of mental disease—venereal disease being the other.

"You can't have your cake and eat it too." The national W. C. T. U. gave out figures last spring regarding the unadvertised side of the government receipts and expenditures during the three years of beer-selling in the United States. People spent approximately eight billions of dollars for drink. The government tax collected was somewhat less than a billion ($960,000,000). True, a lot of money, but in that same time there was spent over ten billion dollars for public and private relief funds. At the same time practically every business in the country suffered by direct diversion of these billions, wheedled out of the public purse for drink.

Loss of buying power. The drinker and his family are poor consumers. A member of the British Parliament said: "I saw a man in the gutter. He was dirty—the soap trade was suffering. His hat was broken—the hat trade suffered. His toes had broken through his boots—the boot trade was suffering." Every legitimate trade was being affected because of the destruction of that man's buying power.

But it is not alone the man in the gutter who represents a lost profitable customer to legitimate business through his taste for drink. The hundreds of thousands of liquor-stores—no matter what they are called—which invite and make easy the consumption of liquor, seriously impair the buying power of millions of moderate drinkers. If we add to their number the wives and children who are dependent on them, we find other millions of customers are lost, or nearly so, to the markets of America every year.

The old saying of the saloon days, that "If it is spent for booze it can't be spent for shoes," is true so far as business is concerned. Legalized drink trade, with the advantage of a protected place of sale and opportunity to advertise and promote the trade in other ways, will invariably mean the diversion from other business of billions of dollars out of the pockets of the people of a country.

One of the farmers' best-paying crops is experiencing a serious decreasing demand. In one year alone (1934) there was a decrease of nearly five hundred million gallons in milk production. This was a loss to the producers alone of $58,400,000, without taking into account the loss to dairies and other intermediate dealers. The depression is usually given as the cause of decreased milk consumption, but this is only partially true. During the same period a surprising amount has been spent for liquors. During the above year consumers spent at least three billion dollars for beer and other drinks.

Meanwhile the government was pouring out money for the needy. The Dairymen's League reported that milk consumption in New York City dropped to such an extent in the summer of 1934, over a ten weeks' period, that a survey was made. This revealed that the people of that city spent one million five hundred thousand dollars less for milk than during the corresponding period the previous year.

Here we have the facts. Which is the best way to bring health, happiness and security to people? Spend money for alcoholic beverages, or for food—clothes, milk, coffee, soft drinks, wholesome recreation, and things that uplift life? Money will be spent. How? We all have a share in the answer.

The Lesson Lived

Susanna G. Fisher

TAXES ARE NOT REDUCED

The drunkard and the glutton shall come to poverty (Prov. 23:21).

The liquor traffic, unlike any other "industry" directly diverts an amount now rapidly growing into billions yearly, from legitimate business, without any equivalent return to its ultimate customers.

The glowing emphasis placed by apologists of the trade upon the revenue accruing to our national, state and local governments from the liquor traffic, fades completely in the light of the facts which show the growing economic, social, educational and political waste in the wakes of the four hundred thousand reopened, law-protected saloons and liquor-selling places throughout the land. The people are paying ten times as much out of their own pockets, either directly for liquor or for drink's share of our annual thirteen billion dollar crime bill. —*American Business Men's Research Foundation.*

NO SAVING

Be not among winebibbers (Prov. 23:20).

One argument for repeal was that it would save taxes for the big taxpayers. Irenee du Pont stated that repeal would save one of his corporations ten millions annually in taxes. But it didn't. His taxes are higher than under prohibition.

James A. Farley told the people over and over again that repeal would make the levying of new taxes unnecessary and would eliminate the need of tax levies which were then on the statute books. But it didn't. New taxes and new taxes have since been levied, until the present tax burden is the greatest in the nation's history.

Joseph H. Choate, late Federal Alcohol Administrator, assured the people that repeal of prohibition would balance the budget. But it didn't. Repeal came, and the nation faces the most staggering peacetime deficit in history.—*Twentieth Century Progress.*

A HUMAN TIGER TRANSFORMED

He that believeth on me (John 6:35).

The following story is taken from the *Sunday School Times.* A French explorer, a captain, was crossing Africa from the Zambesi, east to west, and he came into the region of the Barotse people. He heard stories about the native King Lawanika, whose highest delight had been to put to death by newly invented tortures those who offended him, and who was known as the "human tiger." This French officer came to the station where Pastor Coillard was in charge, and the pastor, himself a Frenchman, entertained his fellow countryman kindly. Then came Sunday. The French officer was outside God, but as a matter of politeness he went to church and sat through the service. When he came out he said, "Monsieur Coillard, who was that remarkable-looking man sitting next to me, who attended so carefully?" "That was King Lawanika, the 'human tiger.'" "Was it?" "Yes." "Then if that is what Christ can do I mean to be his."

"REPEAL was a bid for greater freedom, but it was that kind of freedom that brings abasement. Now we have a liquor thraldom. Nothing but a program of intelligent publicity and education, emphasizing the evils of alcohol and calling the youth to utter abstinence, will save our nation. The truth still has power to set men free."

A Worship Service Program

(Suggested)

OPENING MUSIC. Piano, organ, or orchestra. The first selection should be spirited, to quiet the confusion; the following sober enough to put those present in a worshipful mood.

PRAYER, preferably by the superintendent, or one of his assistants, followed by the Lord's Prayer (in unison). The Twenty-third Psalm may occasionally be thus used.

HYMN. "Praise, My Soul, the King of Heaven!"; "Sing, for the World Rejoices"; "I Will Sing the Wondrous Story."

RESPONSIVE READING.

Superintendent. And all men reasoned in their hearts concerning John, whether haply he were the Christ. John answered, saying unto them all,

School. I indeed baptize you with water; but there cometh he that is mightier than I, the latchet of whose shoes I am not worthy to unloose; he shall baptize you in the Holy Spirit and in fire.

Superintendent. Now after these things the Lord appointed seventy others, and sent them two and two before his face into every city and place whither he himself was about to come. And he said unto them:

School. The harvest indeed is plenteous, but the laborers are few; pray ye therefore the Lord of the harvest, that he send forth laborers into his harvest.

Superintendent. And the seventy returned with joy. And he said unto them: Behold, I have given you authority to tread upon serpents and scorpions, and over all the power of the enemy; and nothing shall in any wise hurt you.

School. Nevertheless, in this rejoice not, that the spirits are subject unto you; but rejoice that your names are written in heaven.

Superintendent. And the apostles said unto the Lord, Increase our faith. And the Lord said,

School. If ye had faith as a grain of mustard-seed, ye would say unto this sycomore-tree, Be thou rooted up, and be thou planted in the sea; and it would obey you.

HYMN. "Hark! Ten Thousand Harps and Voices"; "It May Not Be On the Mountain's Height"; "I Can Hear My Saviour Calling."

SCRIPTURE READING. John 1:29-45; or, Luke 10:25-37; or, Acts 3:1-19.

SPECIAL EXERCISES, such as birthday offering, missionary, evangelistic or temperance talk. (These addresses should be limited to five—eight at the most!—minutes, and they come preferably before the class study.)

HYMN. "Sing Them Over Again to Me"; "Tell Me the Stories of Jesus"; "My Hope Is Built On Nothing Less."

PRAYER (by one of the teachers, the pastor, a visitor, or a member of one of the adult classes).

CLASS STUDY PERIOD.

CLOSING FEATURES.

MUSIC, for reassembling of classes (dignified, but not too quiet).

SUPERINTENDENT'S FIVE MINUTES, for reports, announcements, and, at least on some Sundays, an invitation to make the decision for Christ.

SECRETARY AND TREASURER'S REPORT.

HYMN. "I Would Be True"; "Marching with the Heroes"; "God Be with You Till We Meet Again."

CLOSING, with Mizpah, or Numbers 6:24-26, or other appropriate Benediction (in unison).

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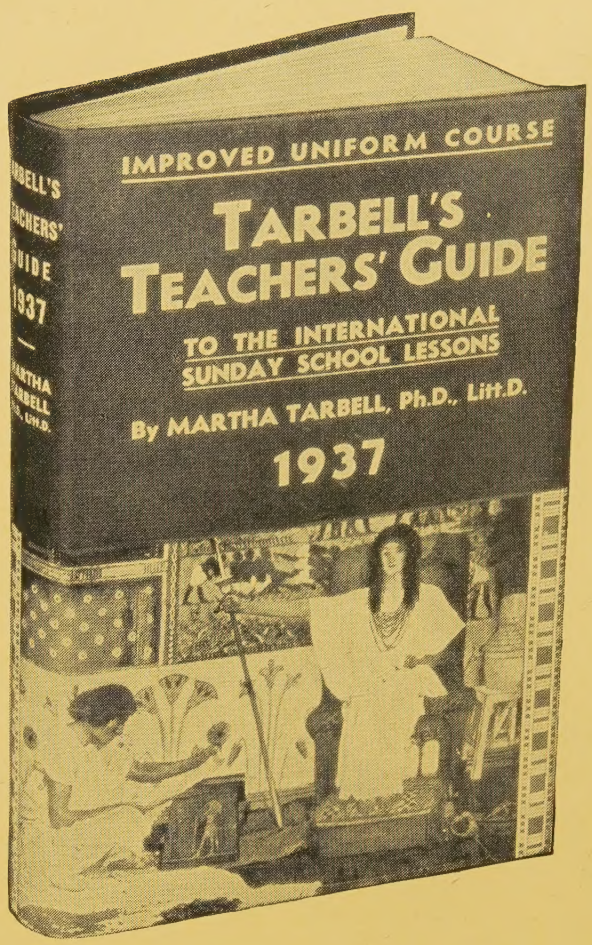

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